

THE NONCONFORMIST.

"The dissidence of dissent and the protestantism of the protestant religion."

No. 53.—VOL. II.

LONDON: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 1842.

PRICE 6d.

ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS.

THE GROWTH OF STATE-SUPPORTED RELIGION.

In our last number we expressed our unfeigned surprise at the elation of spirit with which the clergy record the triumphs, in these days, of state-church principles. We have ourselves been compelled to mourn over the apathy which seems of late to have paralysed the energies of dissent—an apathy which we trust every week is doing something to dispel; but we can find no decisive indications of increasing attachment in this country to religion by compulsion, except the empty boastings of ecclesiastical organs. The writers in these periodicals have the true sacerdotal character. They judge rather by faith than by sight. They look through the glass of their own growing self-importance, and everything around them takes a tinge of the medium through which it is beheld. They have become of late, owing to a strong infusion into their minds of Puseyite doctrines, immensely more important in their own estimation; and by that kind of mental alchemy—common, alas, to them, with the frailest sons of humanity, they assimilate all that they see to the sanguine temperament of their own inflated minds. We have anxiously sought for the facts which might account for, even if they did not justify, clerical exultation. We have rubbed our eyes and looked around us, but have failed to discover any of those positive evidences of state-church triumphs, which can reasonably be regarded as the basis of such colossal pretensions—

"We cannot see the Spanish fleet,
Because 'tis out of sight."

Glancing first at the industrious classes of the community, the millions who work for their daily subsistence, the very body of society—we might have expected to find, taking on implicit trust the assurances of the clergy, that the church of England was striking deep its roots into their affections and confidence. If the facts of the case were such as to bear out the vaunts of state-paid ecclesiastics, we should have beheld our national churches filled to overflowing with the devout poor. According to the representations of the advocates of the compulsory system, church accommodation is very far indeed from being co-extensive with the wants of increased population. It needed, therefore, but few of the humbler ranks of society to be gathered into the maternal bosom of the church to crowd her temples, and impose upon her the necessity of enlarging the place of her habitation. This, however, has not come to pass. The parochial churches, so far as we have heard, are seldom crammed to suffocation by the religious poor. Priestism has not risen above par in the estimation of the multitude. The growing deference entertained by them for the national embodiment of Christianity, if it exist at all, must be profound enough, for nothing whatever of it appears upon the surface. Loud and bitter are the wailings of these same organs over the all but universal scepticism of the present day—not more loud and bitter, we fear, than facts will warrant. The millions do not seem to participate, to any large extent, in those sentiments of esteem and good will which we are told the state church has recently attracted towards herself. We must search for her triumphs elsewhere than amongst them. The growing value they put upon education they owe not to her care, for where she is most triumphant, ignorance is most dense. They owe her little gratitude, and we have as yet observed no disposition on their part to pay her more than they owe.

The case is somewhat different with the middle classes of society. The spasmodic zeal of the clergy has, we think, communicated itself to a considerable number of tory politicians and respectable young ladies. It was hardly to be expected that any system of religion, so closely associated with worldly advantages, so exclusive in its pretensions, so unsparing in its denunciations of the vulgarity of dissent, so petted by the aristocracy, preached with such unction by so many younger sons of barons and of earls, professed with such show of fervid attachment by well nigh every man who uses silver forks and rides in carriages, open or close, could fail of gaining converts from that class who look up with fond adoration to the doings and the sayings of the wealthy and the great. To us it is no marvel that the worshipers of gentility, as soon as hope springs up in their souls, that they shall one day tread upon the outermost verge of aristocratic circles, should open their minds to the persuasive arguments of state church advocates. It is a pleasant thing to travel along a smooth road to heaven in company with select society, to be devout at once and fashionable; and hence wealthy dissenters, soon as their means enable them to keep a country seat and receive the visits of the surrounding gentry, usually allow their children to grow up in Stygian ignorance of their principles, and put no obstacles in the way to their decent settlement in life by intermarrying with the members of the favoured sect. All this is natural, and in this direction we doubt not the establishment has made some little accession to its numbers. But even here its tri-

umphs are small, and must be held to be counterbalanced by the wide adoption within its own pale of the voluntary principle. True state religion has made no way even among the middle classes of the community; for compulsory exactions for the maintenance of Christianity are falling into disesteem even amongst churchmen.

The only decisive indication we have been able to find of the triumphs of state religion is to be recognised in the spirit of the clergy. It increases rather in intensity than in extent. Taking the word church in that sense in which it is most commonly employed, and confining the application of the term to those who perform the functions of the priest, compulsory religion may with truth be said to have made surprising advances within the last ten years. It has divested itself of all mawkish sentimentality, and has succeeded in reviving in modern times the fanatical intolerance of the days which preceded the first overthrow in this country of kingly and episcopal power. Its assumptions are no longer limited by the bounds either of decency or common sense. It burns heretics in effigy. Its demands upon the passive submission of men to its claims are larger than its power to enforce them. Its activities all run into a kind of confluent persecution. With an eagerness all its own, it is grasping every handle, which the canon law of a barbarous age puts within its reach, to worry and intimidate those who dissent from its communion. As weeks roll on, it waxes bolder in the use of these oppressive weapons. Distraints for church rates, once resorted to with timid reluctance, are now regarded as milk-and-water embodiments of church principles. Imprisonment for recusancy in this respect was soon followed up by imprisonment for non-attendance at the parish church; and our columns of this week exhibit the rector of Cottenham breathing forth threatenings of an ecclesiastical citation for the crime of circulating anti-establishment tracts.

Here, then, we have the true triumphs of the compulsory system! Here, and possibly also in the regard of the legislature. The parliament which least sympathises with the people, most sympathises with the church. Wherever you find political tyranny rampant, you find ecclesiastical pretensions most favourably received. Despotism and state religion have ever gone hand in hand—twin brothers of the same parent. Let not the church, however, misunderstand its own position—let it not mistake the singing in its own ears, which denotes apoplectic tendencies, for any unusual stir without; or fancy, as it catches the echo of its own voice, that it hears the distant shout of an admiring nation. The mighty fuss in the midst of which it lives is all its own creation—is but the rustle of its own increased activity—is heard by none but itself. The people of this country, so far from giving in to its assumptions, are calmly looking on, expecting every moment to see it fall and die in one of these convulsive fits. They have seen a similar spirit of arrogant pretence in Scotland run its head against the state, and fall back by the violence of the shock into the precincts of dissent; and if in England a similar impetuosity should be shielded from a similar fate, by the thick padding of rich endowments and enormous ecclesiastical wealth, they yet watch to see, not unconcerned, the issue of the present struggle by the clergy for increased power, consoling themselves under present inconveniences by implicit faith in the hackneyed adage,

"Quem deus vult perdere prius dementat."

A vestry meeting was held at Lynn, last week, for the purpose of assessing the rate payers of St Margaret's parish, to a church rate of eightpence per pound. The polling was continued the full time allowed by law, and at the conclusion the numbers were declared to be for the rate, 430; against it, 221; majority for the rate, 209. Our correspondent informs us that if the dissenters had been true to their principles, the church party would have been in a miserable minority. But numbers of the dissenters refused to vote at all; while not a few basely apostatised, and voted for the rate. Indeed the defection was so general, that one of the most flourishing bodies of dissenters in the town did not poll more than seven or eight votes against the rate.

A correspondent informs us, that a clergyman in the neighbourhood of Saxmundham, finding that many of his poor parishioners, as well as others, wander out of his parish on the Lord's day, that they may worship God more agreeably to their own wishes at the dissenters' chapel, has recently sent his steward to several, commanding their attendance at church, or threatening to compel the payment of tithes for their garden ground; in addition to which he threatens to enforce the payment for years back, in one case six years; in another he has succeeded in obtaining it for three years, the poor man being determined to pay rather than violate his best feelings.

The Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol has issued a circular to the rural deans of his diocese, requesting them to inquire into the ecclesiastical condition of every parish in the diocese, with a view to church extension, and to report the same to his lordship under the following heads:—1. Population, and how situated with regard to divine worship. 2. Number of persons for whom there is at present church

room. 3. How many services on each Lord's day. 4. How often the holy sacrament is administered—average number of communicants. 5. If the church accommodation be inadequate, state whether you recommend that the deficiency should be supplied by enlarging the present building, or by the erection of another church.

The sum required to complete the restoration of the parts of the York Minster injured by the fire is 9,000*l.*; 4,000*l.* of this sum the dean and chapter agree to provide, and for the remaining 5,000*l.* they look to the public.

Dr Channing, in a letter to Hamer Stansfeld, expresses his profound conviction that the working classes of England have no faith in Christianity as a source of hope, either for the present or the future. Used only to the perverted form of Christianity taught in our state church, which no more resembles the religion of Jesus of Nazareth than the golden calf of the rebel Israelites resembled the deity, whose power it was intended to usurp, the labouring men of England have unhappily associated it with everything that is hostile to human progress in knowledge, truth, and happiness. Bishops, priests, and deacons, with their bigotry, insincerity, and hollow conventionalisms, have contributed but too well to render the population of England an infidel population. Supported in wealth, which has often been wrung from the misery of the poor—paraded in ostentatious rank, which mocks at wide spread destitution, the working man has been unable to regard them in any other light than as selfish and rapacious deceivers, who have made use of the terrors of superstition in order to cement their own power and secure their worldly interests. That this view of the Anglican clergy and of the results of their teaching is literally true, admits of no doubt. But Dr Channing mistakes, if he imagines that all the working classes are so ignorant as to take Christianity on the representation of priesthood. We know that, as a reaction from a state of bigoted acquiescence, there has sprung up an equally bigoted scepticism, but we also know that their number is not small who have sought and found in the pure and holy teachings of Christianity a warrant for their fondest hopes of universal equality; nor have there been wanting able, pious and enthusiastic ministers of the gospel, who themselves have directed the national mind to some of its loftiest moral truths, endeavouring to show that the German philosopher was guilty of no exaggeration in declaring that "Christianity was the root of all democracy; the highest fact in the rights of man."—*National Association Gazette.*

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the Nonconformist.

SIR—In your paper of March 30th, a letter is inserted from a Scotch dis-senter regarding the manner of conducting funerals in Scotland. What is stated in that letter is nearly correct, but not quite so. A service of wine, &c. has been very fashionable for many years, preceded and succeeded by a prayer, as your correspondent describes; but now it is becoming quite common to have no wine, &c., but a prayer, after which the company proceed to the place of interment.

These remarks apply all but exclusively to the West of Scotland. In the eastern counties the company assemble exactly at the hour in front of the house of mourning, and in a few minutes after the hour has struck, move away to the place of burial. In some cases, the pastor of the church to which the departed belonged, unites in prayer with the friends before the hour of interment, but the practice is not universal. The less of parade there is on such occasions, the more room is there left for direct impression, from the fact that a fellow-immortal has left the world.

Airdrie, April 1st, 1842.

T. M.

THE RECTOR OF COTTONHAM.

To the Editor of the Nonconformist.

"Whoever is afraid of submitting any question, civil or religious, to the test of free discussion, seems to be more in love with his own opinion than with truth."—*BISHOP WATSON.*

SIR—I now send you the enclosed documents—which, from various causes, have been some time delayed—for publication in your journal. They may be useful in this enlightened age. I had given no personal offence to Mr Frere; I never intended doing so; but I circulated the state church pamphlets, and for this alone, was threatened with persecution, and requested to submit to a recantation and degradation, which must astonish and disgust every thinking mind! I submit the case to a discerning public. I have "nothing extenuated, nor set down aught in malice."

Cottenham, The Rectory, August 5th, 1841.

"Mr MANN—I write to inform you, that in pursuance of my duty as rector of this parish, I presented you yesterday to the bishop of the diocese, for having circulated among my parishioners a tract, entitled, 'A State Church inconsistent with the New Testament,' which denies the church of England, by law established, to be a true and apostolical church.

"I have to acquaint you that the punishment for this crime is excommunication, and that you will be cited into the Ecclesiastical court, and condemned in costs.

"As, however, my sole desire is to vindicate the honour of God and his church before men; and, by making you sensible that you have been guilty of a heavy offence against both, to prevent your committing the like in future; and, as I have no wish to trouble you, or have you in any way punished, I requested the bishop to stay proceedings against you for ten days, which his lordship has readily granted.

"If you, therefore, will withdraw all the copies of this tract which you can remember having circulated among my parishioners, and will deliver them, together with as many more as you may happen to have now in your possession, to me, on or before Monday next, the 9th inst.; and if you will, further, on or before the same day, acknowledge your fault in having circulated these tracts, and will set your hand to the acknowledgment of it, which I herewith send you, consenting that I shall cause the same to be read publicly in church, on some Sunday which I shall appoint, during the time of divine service, I will stay the proceedings against you altogether.

To Mr Mann.

JOHN FRERE, Rector.

THE RECENTION OF MR JOHN MANN, OF THE PARISH OF COTTONHAM.

"I, John Mann, of the parish of Cottenham, in the diocese of Ely, acknowledge myself guilty of having distributed in this parish a blasphemous tract, entitled, 'A State Church inconsistent with the New Testament,' which denies the church of England, by law established, to be a true and apostolical church, and contains many things against the ministers of Christ calculated to mislead the simple and ignorant; wickedly and falsely representing the clergy as the authors of war and bloodshed; as the regular successors of the pagan priesthood, and as establishing their authority, not by pureness and charity over the consciences of men, but over their persons and property by violence and the sword.

"I, John Mann, having been brought to see the wickedness of these assertions, do repudiate and renounce them; I am heartily sorry that I have contributed to disseminate them; I humbly ask forgiveness of God, and of his church; and I pray God not to lay this sin to my charge.

"And further, I hereby promise and declare, that I will never again, by word or deed, by the circulation of printed writings, or otherwise, oppose or oppugn the ministers, or liturgy, or rites and ceremonies of the church of England.

"In witness whereof I have this day set my hand hereto.

Cottenham, the — day of August, in the year of our Lord 1841.

I wrote a reply to Mr Frere, in which I refused acceding to his request; that reply I did not send, as the rev. gentleman unexpectedly came to my house, accompanied by the parish church clerk. I then expressed to him the determination to which I had come.

Mr Frere's note to myself, dated the 10th, which should have been the 9th, I received on the same morning soon after I had had the conference with him, to which I returned a verbal answer by my friend, Mr Sanderson, that I was going on a journey, and had not time then to write to him.

Monday, 10th August, 1841.

"Mr MANN—As the bishop will expect an answer when I see him tomorrow, I request that you will send me by ten o'clock at latest, this evening, any thing that you may have to offer to him in excuse or extenuation, that I may present it to his lordship.

"Yours, truly,

"J. FRERE."

The following note was received by Mr Sanderson on the day after the confirmation held at Cambridge:—

"Cottenham, The Rectory, August 11th, 1841.

"Mr SANDERSON—As you seem to be interested in behalf of Mr Mann, I hope you will have the goodness to inform him that the bishop was too much occupied yesterday to give an immediate answer to my application to him; and therefore I suppose the matter must rest till his lordship's return to London.

"Yours, truly,

"J. FRERE."

Since then nothing further, that I am aware of, has transpired relative to the above affair.

I am, sir, yours respectfully,

JOHN MANN.

Cottenham, near Cambridge, April 6, 1842.

IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PETITIONS FOR THE WEEK.

Coals, against duty on exportation of, 11.	Leather, against alteration of duties on, 30.
Coal mines, against employment of females in, 4.	Lord's day, for better observance of, 1.
Cattle, meat, &c., against importation of, 69.	Marriages (Ireland), for declaring valid, 3.
for ditto, 1.	Maynooth college, against further grant to, 29.
Corn laws, for repeal of, 43.	Poor Law Amendment act, for amendment of, 2.
Corn Importation bill, against, 18.	Timber duties, against alteration of, 6.
Education (Ireland), against present system, 16.	Union with Ireland, for repeal of, 2.
for a national system, 1.	War in the East, against the, 1.
Hill Coolies, against exportation of, 1.	

PUBLIC BUSINESS TRANSACTED.

BILLS PRESENTED, AND READ A FIRST TIME.

1. Timber Ships bill.	2. Fisheries (Ireland) bill.
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BILLS READ A SECOND TIME.

1. Indemnity bill.	3. Fisheries (Ireland) bill.
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2. Timber Ships bill.	4. Ways and means.
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CONSIDERED IN COMMITTEE.

1. Corn Importation bill.	3. Indemnity bill.
2. Copyright bill.	4. Ways and means.

BILLS READ A THIRD TIME, AND PASSED.

1. Parish Property bill.	3. Corn Importation bill.
2. Exchequer bills bill.	4. Indemnity bill.

MOTIONS.

Petitions against taxes—Motion made and question put, "That the practice of this House, which precludes the presentation of petitions upon the subject of any tax or duty under its consideration, be discontinued."—(Mr Thomas Duncombe.) The House divided; ayes 136, noes 167.

Corn Importation bill—Order for third reading read; motion made and question proposed, "That the bill be now read the third time." Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the question, in order to add the words, "inasmuch as this House has repeatedly declared, by its votes and the reports of its committees, that it is beyond the power of parliament to regulate the wages of labour in this country, it is inexpedient and unjust to pass a law to regulate, with a view to raise unnaturally, the prices of food,"—(Mr Cobden)—instead thereof: Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question." The House divided; ayes 236, noes 86.

SUBSTANCE OF CONVERSATIONS.

THE AFGHAN WAR.—In answer to a question from Mr Escort on Friday evening, Sir R. Peel said, that with respect to the causes which led to the war in Afghanistan several papers were laid on the table of the house some time since, which, he presumed, stated the grounds on which the government thought themselves justified in undertaking the expedition into Afghanistan. With regard to events, the information of her Majesty's government, excepting as to the melancholy loss stated in the public prints, was extremely imperfect, and did not enable him, consistently with his public duty, to make any statement on the subject. The causes which led to the enormous loss recently sustained, and the motives of those who acted in the transactions, were imperfectly known to the government, and the information respecting them proceeded from private sources rather than official intelligence.

DEBATES.

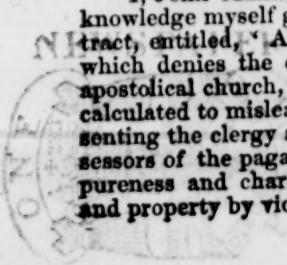
Wednesday, April 6.

COPYRIGHT BILL.

The House was occupied the whole night with a debate on the Copyright bill.

Lord Mahon, the originator of the bill, began the discussion by explaining the general scope of the measure; the leading feature of which is, that the copyright of literary works shall continue for the author's life and twenty-five years beyond. He went at some length into a review of ancient legislation upon the subject from the time of Queen Anne, and contended that, although the proposed measure might have the effect of keeping up the price of books, it was necessary for the national honour and interest that sympathy towards authors should be evinced. The bill of Sergeant Talfourd was opposed by various parties interested; but not only authors, but the three classes connected with them—the publishers, the printers, and the stationers—were all favourable to the present bill.

Mr Macaulay concurred in the objects of Lord Mahon, but thought they would be better accomplished by protecting each copyright for



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the term of life or of forty-two years, whichever of those terms should have the longest duration. This extension, which gave fourteen years in addition to the present period of twenty-eight, would best guard against the uncertainty of human life, and most nearly equalise the protection to the earlier and to the later productions of the same writer, whilst Lord Mahon's measure gave the longest copyright to the crude productions of youth, and the shortest to the matured works of middle and later life.

Sir R. INGLIS and Mr MILNES preferred Lord Mahon's plan to Mr Macaulay's.

Mr WAKLEY saw no necessity for a change in the existing law in favour of authors. Cheap books were indispensable in the present age to the improvement of people's minds. He wanted to know why poets should be protected more than other inventors. The poet was not, in his opinion, so useful to the public as the man of science. In support of this view he quoted several passages from the poems of Wordsworth, which set the whole House in a roar of laughter. He compared the case of a patent, on which only fourteen years were allowed, with the protection granted to literature; and contrasted the high prices at which many great works had been sold pending the copyright in them with the low prices at which the public had obtained them when the copyright was expired; and enumerated many cases of large sums received by modern authors.

The first and second sections of the bill were then passed, and on the third Mr Macaulay moved an amendment embodying the suggestions he had before thrown out.

Sir R. PEEL said he should prefer Mr Macaulay's plan to Lord Mahon's if seven years were added after death where the forty-two years had expired; but Mr Macaulay was not disposed to adopt this new suggestion.

Some conversation took place, with the view to an arrangement; but no party seemed inclined to give way; and Mr AGLIONBY said that some members, of whom he was one, were opposed to all extension whatever, on the principle of protection to the reading public. The committee then divided successively on the plans of the various parties, and the result was that Sir Robert Peel's combination was adopted, giving 42 years at all events, and seven more from the author's death, when the 42 years shall have expired in his life time.

The fourth clause proposed to give a similar benefit to the authors of books already published, and after a short discussion the House affirmed it. The remaining parts of the bill consisting of several sections of regulations and details were then passed, and the House adjourned.

Thursday, April 7.

RIGHT OF PETITIONING.

Mr T. DUNCOMBE brought forward a motion to discontinue the practice which precludes the presentation of petitions respecting any tax or duty under its consideration. He considered that this practice was highly injurious to the general right of petitioning; and he contended that as the professed object was only to preclude obstructions of the provision for the current year, it was unreasonable to prohibit petitions against the pending income tax, which had been announced by the ministers as intended not merely for the current year, but for a period of three years.

Sir GEORGE CLERK opposed the motion; and argued that the people were competent to instruct their representatives to oppose the tax.

Mr MACAULAY thought there ought to be only two grounds for rejecting a petition—that the language was disrespectful, or the subject beyond the jurisdiction of the House. In this instance the subject was peculiarly within the province of the House of Commons. There was not even an excuse for refusing them on the ground of inconvenience, now that the right of debating upon petitions was taken away.

Sir R. PEEL taunted Mr Macaulay with having acquired his zeal upon this subject since his retirement from office. The rule had been enforced in the time of the late government without awakening any indignation in his breast. Even in 1795, when so much excitement prevailed on the subject of popular liberty, Mr Fox and Lord Grey had supported the practice now complained of. He should meet the question by a direct negative.

After some remarks from Sir G. GREY, Mr C. BULLER, Sir J. HANMER, and Mr WAKLEY, in support of the motion, the House divided; when there appeared for the motion 136, against it 167, majority against the motion 31.

CORN IMPORTATION BILL.

On the order of the day for the third reading of the Corn Importation bill, Mr COBDEN moved an amendment to the effect that as it has been declared by the House impracticable to regulate the wages of labour, it is inexpedient and unjust to regulate, with a view unnaturally to raise, the prices of food. He recapitulated the various cases in which the House had declined to interfere on the subject of wages. He cited tables of wages for the purpose of showing that they do not rise whenever the prices of food advance.

The House had frequently declared that they could give no protection to the wages of the labourer, but they were now about to give a third reading to a bill which was to give a fictitious price to corn, and so, as far as possible, regulate and keep at a high rate the price of his food. They said to the poor Hinckley framework-knitter, "We cannot regulate the remuneration to be given for your labour;" but, when he said, "Your wheat is too high, I cannot purchase of you, because I can get as good at Hamburgh for 40s.," then the landowner stepped in and said, "Oh, no! we have a law which says you must give us a certain price for our wheat before you can go to Hamburgh or any other place for it."

It was to keep up thus the price of food at home that the law now under consideration was intended. It was producing revolutionary tendencies, and shaking the security of landed titles. There had been within the last few years a sacrifice of more than half the fixed manufacturing capital in Lancashire; and the floating capital, he believed, was gone to a still greater extent.

Mr BROTHERTON seconded the motion.

Sir R. PEEL observed that Mr Cobden's resolution applied equally against a fixed duty as against the sliding scale now proposed, and, therefore, could not be supported by any member who thought a fixed duty expedient. After the numerous discussions which had taken place on the subject, he declined going into it again.

Lord JOHN RUSSELL did not wish, after the opinion expressed by the House on the second reading, to divide against the third. He was still adverse to the graduated duty. It was a plausible devise; but he believed that its author, Mr Huskisson, if his life had been spared, would have acknowledged it to be a failure. The fixed duty would

give a steady supply, while the sliding scale admitted much dangerous speculation. He did not wish to abrogate all duty; he was still for a moderate fixed protection to the farmer.

Mr VILLIERS could not allow the bill to pass without again expressing his unqualified condemnation of it. No law could be more unsuitable to the circumstances of the country at the present time.

The measure would not relieve any party; it would not satisfy any party. The same faulty principle, carried out by the same mischievous system, existed in this bill as in the present law. The sliding scale, varying with circumstances, and which it was allowed might be influenced by interested persons, so completely baffled all the calculations of the producer, whether in Poland or America, that no man of sense would invest his capital in the cultivation of corn. The effect of this bill would be to drive purchasers to buy at high prices in near markets; the exportation of bullion from this country would be the consequence; the value of money would be raised, trade would be depressed, a contraction of credit would follow, and those lamentable results would be produced which had before been experienced.

It had been said that the right hon. baronet was fully aware of the evils of his measure, but that it was out of his power to accomplish more.

By whom, then, were improvements in the law opposed? The right hon. baronet seemed to have great influence over hon. gentlemen on the opposite side of the house, who appeared extremely quiet and docile, and who would, no doubt, accede to any alteration proposed by the right hon. baronet. Did the right hon. baronet suppose that if he proposed a measure which was supported by public opinion, he would not be able to carry it? Could the hon. members for Essex, Sussex, and Berkshire, form a government? If the right hon. baronet framed a popular measure, he would be sure to be supported; and he believed the right hon. baronet might even gain the assent of his own party to such a measure.

The most weighty argument which concerned the nation at large, which the supporters of the measure put forward was, that this country ought not to be dependent upon foreign nations for its supply of food.

He thought no scheme could be devised more likely to render them dependent upon foreign countries than the present measure. The people must depend for their supply of corn either upon the foreign producer or upon the landholders of this country; and what was it to them upon which of these parties they had to depend? It was a fact that one-third of the population of this island did not consume wheat; and why? Because they could not afford to buy it, in consequence of its high price. It appeared, then, that the people were in a worse condition from depending for their supply of food upon the growers at home than if they depended upon the foreign producer, for in the latter case they would obtain trade as well as food, and a strong inducement would exist for the maintenance by foreign states of peaceable relations with this country.

Sir J. TYRELL supported the third reading.

Mr WARD impeached the consistency of the country members in supporting a measure from Sir R. Peel which they would have scouted from Lord John Russell. They had obtained their seats in that house on false pretences, having told their constituents they were opposed to all change in the corn laws. They would now have to yield much more; the stone was set rolling; and the sacred interests of the protected classes were sacred no longer.

Mr DARBY and Mr PALMER supported the third reading, and Mr WAKLEY opposed it.

Mr BLACKSTONE, Lord WORSLEY, and Mr EATON, announced their intention of voting against Sir R. Peel, as they deemed the measure was rendered still more dangerous by the proposal in the tariff for the admission of live cattle.

Mr FIELDEN, Mr BROTHERTON, and Sir V. BLAKE, supported Mr Cobden's motion; after which the House divided, when there appeared—for the amendment, 86; against it, 236.

Mr HENLEY then moved the adjournment of the debate to Monday, which proposition the House rejected by a majority of 179.

Dr BOWRING moved that the bill be read a third time that day six months; and the House again divided, when there appeared, for the third reading, 229; against it, 90; majority, 139.

Mr FRENCH proposed the addition of a clause suspending for six months the importation of flour into Ireland. Sir R. PEEL objected to make such an exception, and, after some conversation, Mr FRENCH withdrew his clause.

Mr WAKLEY then proposed an additional clause to exclude from the returns for the averages any corn which should be sold for a price by a third less than that which the best corn produced. Sir R. PEEL objected to the obvious facilities which such a plan would afford for fraud, and the motion having been negatived the bill was passed, and the other orders having been gone through, the House adjourned.

Friday, April 8.

RIGHT OF PETITIONING.

Mr DUNCOMBE renewed the discussion on this subject on presenting a petition from various parties in the metropolis against the income tax, which the Speaker said could not be received. Mr D. said there was no rule or standing order, which prevented the House from receiving the petition he held in his hand, and he should take the sense of the House on the question. The opposition benches being full at the time and the ministerial nearly empty, the effect of the division would doubtless have been to set aside the vote of the preceding evening; but the tories, aided by Lord John Russell, Mr Aglionby, and other whigs succeeding in adjourning the debate till Monday.

THE INCOME TAX.

On the question that the report of the committee of ways and means should be brought up, Lord JOHN RUSSELL moved the following resolution by way of amendment:—

"That it has been stated to this House, on official authority, that the deficiency of income to meet the expenditure of the country may be estimated, for the year ending the 5th day of April, 1842, at 2,350,000*l.*, and on the 5th day of April, 1843, at 2,569,000*l.* That this House is fully sensible of the evil of a continued inadequacy of the public income to meet the public charges, and will take effectual measures for averting the same in future years. That, by a judicious alteration of the duties on corn, by a reduction of the prohibitory duty on foreign sugar, and an adjustment of the duties on timber and coffee, the advantage of a moderate price to the community may be combined with an increased revenue to the state; that, in addition to those main articles of general consumption, the interests of trade will be promoted by the repeal or reduction of various prohibitory and differential duties, and that extended commerce will improve the revenue, while it gives employment to industry. That the amount of taxes taken off, or reduced, from the termination of the last war to the end of the year 1836, exclusive of the tax on income, may be stated in round numbers at 23,873,000*l.* That the income tax, having been first imposed in a period of extreme emergency, and during a most perilous war, was repealed on the re-establishment of peace, and having been again imposed on the renewal of war, was again repealed in 1816 on the termination of hostilities. That, considering the various means of supplying the present deficiency, without enhancing the price of the necessities of life, or embarrassing trade, it is the opinion of this House that the renewal of a tax, inquisitorial in its character, unequal in its pressure, and which has hitherto been considered as the financial reserve of the nation in time of war, is not called for by public necessity, and is therefore not advisable."

He was of opinion that the government had taken too gloomy a view of the country's financial difficulties; the difficulties which required the chief consideration were the commercial ones; and accordingly

the new burdens were proposed rather for commercial than for financial purposes. It was under pressure of war, and under great and increasing deficiencies, that an income tax had on former occasions been imposed; at the return of peace it had always been removed; and there had been an understanding that it was to be reserved for seasons of war.

The difficulty which you had to encounter when the income tax was first proposed so far as finances are concerned, was of this nature:—For several years you had been engaged in war, and you were adding every year to the amount of your debt; borrowing money on very disadvantageous terms, and increasing every year, therefore, the interest of the public debt. In the year before the income tax was proposed, a loan of £15,000,000*l.* was raised for the service of the year. In that year the assessed taxes were, I think, trebled; but there was this addition with respect to them, that every person who was obliged by those assessed taxes to pay more than one-tenth of his income should declare that such was the fact, and be thereby exempted from the payment of any overplus beyond that amount. In the following year, notwithstanding the imposition of those assessed taxes, which then produced more than £4,000,000*l.* it was found that there was a deficiency of £10,000,000*l.* for the service of the year. The pressure of the war required a very great effort to be made, and the minister of that day, having the House and the country with him in favour of the prosecution of the war, then thought it necessary, and I think rightly, not to go on increasing the debt in such an immense ratio, but to ask for a still further effort from the country in order to make the revenue nearly equal to the expenditure of the war. As soon as the war was over the succeeding minister, Mr Addington, came down to the house and proposed at once that the income tax should be discontinued.

No such difficulties as these existed at the present time. He then took a review of the objections to an income tax, and stated that it taxed the funds—that it was unequal in its operation—that it was inquisitorial in its nature. There was also a peculiar unfitness in the time of proposing it.

During the latter part of the time of war, from 1797, the currency was gradually more and more depreciated; and the consequence of that depreciation was somewhat similar to the effects recorded by historians as having been produced by the discovery of the precious metals, accompanied by this depreciation; the consequence of this was, an increase in the wealth of the trading community, but a hardship on those whose incomes were fixed; so that, from concurring circumstances, trade was better able to bear a tax of this sort at that period. But is that the position of affairs at the present period? Are you not dealing with trade, on the contrary, in a state of great difficulty—with trade at a time when there is only a hope of its recovery, but with scarcely any symptoms, certainly no strong signs, of that recovery? At such a crisis it must be peculiarly injurious that traders should have their affairs made known. I do not speak merely of individuals, but that which is injurious to individuals so circumstanced must be injurious to the community at large; nor can it fail to be very injurious to come upon men, perhaps already in difficulties, struggling with small capitals, and impose upon them the additional embarrassment of this inquisition and disclosure.

He admitted the necessity of providing for the deficiency, and specified several articles of consumption from which he thought a sufficient revenue might be obtained for that purpose. These were sugar, timber, and wheat; on the first £587,000, on the second £600,000, and on the third £530,000, might be obtained without pressure on the people. On coffee and timber, a needless sacrifice of revenue had been made. There were various other suggestions, most of which he thought preferable to the government plan; for instance, a duty on the succession to landed property, and an increase of the assessed taxes on four-wheeled carriages, male servants, and other items in the expenditure of the rich. He entreated the house to try every other source of revenue before they adopted the income tax, for once adopted it would not speedily be got rid of.

There is this extremely serious disadvantage in the income tax—you cannot impose such a tax, and proceed to collect it, without setting a great body of machinery in motion for the next five years. You will therefore incur all that expense and trouble, an expense and trouble perfectly unavailing for any other purpose, when the time shall arrive at which the income tax is to be repealed; but how marked the contrast between that and the assessed taxes; they can be as easily imposed as they are easily repealed. If you impose the income tax you will draw from the people £4,000,000 per annum. I say £4,000,000, for I think the right hon. baronet has greatly underrated the amount which he may expect to derive from this tax. Yielding then, as I think it will, a sum of £4,000,000 annually, I venture to say that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be in no great hurry to take off such a tax. We know that it is certainly imposed for three years—it is highly probable that it may be continued for five years—it is probable that the duration of the tax may extend to five or ten years.

He then went into the question of a fixed duty on corn, and contended that the late administration were not enemies but friends to the agricultural interest. He had never deceived the farmers, which was more than many of their professed friends could say. He concluded by asking whether an income tax of £4,000,000, and that a partial and unequal tax, was to be imposed, not for the necessities of the country, but for the avowed purpose of supporting an administration? If so, he thought the nation would ere long regret that they had elected a House of Commons which had so betrayed the trust reposed in it.

Mr GOULBURN hailed the admission of the noble lord that the deficiency must be provided for, and contended that it was not enough for the House to meet the mere present necessity; they were bound to regard the state of affairs in the East, and the probable expenses which the contests there would involve, and to place their finances upon a basis which would enable them to do justice to the country in future years. And it was Mr Pitt's opinion that an income tax was proper for this purpose.

It was clear that it was not the opinion of Pitt, that the income tax was to be considered only as applicable in time of war. He considered this mode of taxation as the most effective means of raising the public credit, and rescuing the country from the difficulties in which it was involved. The noble lord stated truly, that this tax was repealed by Mr Addington in 1802, at the peace of Amiens. The loans, however, which had been contracted during the war were provided for. Simultaneously with the repeal of the income tax, £4,000,000 of taxation was imposed on the country. £2,000,000 were derived from the malt tax, £1,000,000 from imports, and £1,000,000 resulted from assessed taxes. In this way a substitute was found for the property tax which had been repealed.

Lord Althorp, in later times, had declared the necessity of meeting a deficiency of £2,500,000, should it occur, even in profound peace, by the imposition of an income tax. In truth the maintenance of public credit was just as important in peace as in war, and a system of loans in peace was to be carefully guarded against—that system which had been so long the resource of the late government. He took up the objections urged by Lord John Russell against the income tax, and met them by the same arguments employed by himself and Sir Robert Peel in the previous debates on the subject. He then adverted to the budget of the late ministry, particularly to the proposed admission of foreign sugar, and stated the ground of objection to it to be the encouragement it would give to slavery and the slave trade. Even if the budget of the late ministry had been adopted, there would still be a deficiency of £2,000,000. Now as to the new suggestions of the noble lord. The first was a legacy duty on landed property.

There seemed an erroneous opinion to prevail, that nothing but personal property paid the legacy duty. He could assure the House that that was a gross fallacy. The legacy duty attached to all mortgages and other charges upon real estate upon their devise or descent. Of the legacy duty now received, a large proportion arose from

charges on the land. Another error seemed equally to prevail, viz., that all personal property of whatever kind paid the legacy duty upon succession. That was not so, for a large portion of personal property was exempt from that tax, as well as landed estate. But suppose they did apply a succession tax upon real property. From inquiries he had made upon the subject, he had found that the largest landed estates were settled in such way that they would wholly escape any payment of the legacy duty; they were so tied up by marriage settlements and other deeds, that they would contribute nothing to a legacy duty. Those settlements made the holder of them a mere tenant for life of the property, and it was therefore not subject to the duty; and, if as much personal property were tied up in the same manner, even in the same deed, that property would be as free from the legacy duty as the greatest landed estate in the country. The tax, then, would fall, not upon the inheritor of large properties, but upon the small proprietor, upon those parties who derived their £100 a year from land, and who did not tie up their property by marriage settlements, because of their inability to bear the expense of stamps and other incidental charges.

By the best approximation he had been able to make, it appeared that of a total of about £8,000,000 produced in six years by the legacy duty, upwards of £3,000,000 had been yielded by the legacies charged on land; and he quoted a speech of Mr Baring, the late chancellor of the exchequer, corroborating these results. The noble lord had also recommended an increase of the assessed taxes; but such taxes did not, as he seemed to think, fall on the rich alone. The window tax, indeed, had once been a very productive one, but that was when the smaller class of houses was included, which in later times the government had been enabled to exempt; and it could not be desirable to bring back the poorer tenants into such an assessment. Full time had now elapsed for the people to form their opinions of the proposed measure, and he trusted that the House would enable the government to maintain by it the credit of the country.

Mr WILLIAMS (Coventry) disliked the income tax, but thought Lord John Russell had made out no very good case in his other objections to the ministerial finance. He had himself given notice of two proposals, both of which he thought better than those of the noble lord. First, he would propose on all inheritances or devises of land a duty equal to the probate and legacy duty on personalty; and secondly, a graduated per centage on salaries and other incomes payable out of the public revenue. He calculated that these two measures would produce from £4,000,000 to £4,500,000, which would be sufficient to meet the deficiency.

Sir R. INGLIS would wish to leave out of consideration the first £150 in a person's income, and tax only the surplus—thus a man with £250 would pay on £100 only, and so on.

Mr STEWART and Sir W. SOMERVILLE opposed the tax, and Mr PALMER and Capt. HAMILTON supported it.

Mr SHEIL was persuaded of the people's generous willingness to come forward for the public safety; but it was a feeling of which the minister should be slow to avail himself. The minister had said, that unless he carried his tax and his tariff, he would retire; but his virtue was not likely to be put to that test. His first difficulty would be his success.

He does not now stand before us in the condition of a minister likely to meet with the difficulty of defeat. His difficulty is one of those which it is easy to encounter, and easy to conquer; but which is not so easily to be followed up. It is not now that the right hon. baronet has to fear, but when the income tax is in full operation—when the grievous burden is pressing on the people—when the full meaning of the words "income tax" is understood—when schedule D becomes perfectly intelligible—when the tax is viewed through the medium of experience, that best of all public instructors—when it is discovered that it makes levies from that "beneficial interest" (to use an expression very popular during the Irish debates) from which a man's subsistence is derived—when it is found out that no allowance is made for fire, for clothing, or for the roof that covers the Englishman's head—when the free-born Briton's privacy comes to be invaded by inquisitorial commissioners—when an investigation, taken on oath, is made as to the circumstances of an individual, whom your commissioners, general, additional, and special, shall conjecture to be worth more than £150 a year—when all the pain and oppression is felt—when, in one word, the income tax is brought home, then will be the time when the people will ask whether this measure is unavoidable; whether to any other expedient the minister could have had recourse; whether by the possession of power he was not tempted to its abuse; whether he did not avail himself of excited and enthusiastic majorities for the purpose of inflicting upon the country a tax, which neither from our present circumstances nor our future prospects was justifiable.

It was rash to increase the nominal deficiency for the purpose of supplying it with an income tax. The tariff should at least have been perfect to warrant such an impost for its sake. He then criticised the reduction of duty on timber, and the non-reduction of duty on sugar. Ministers talked of the foreign slave trade, and yet lowered the duties upon the coffee of the foreign slave colonies. The present deficiency had been charged upon the whigs; but it was not by the whigs that the debt had been raised to hundreds of millions. By them, on the contrary, taxes to the amount of £6,000,000 had been remitted. The Income-tax act, passed by the whigs of 1806, was framed to continue till the April following the treaty of peace, and no longer. It was a tax that had been condemned by the greatest authorities. It was unjust and oppressive, and was, moreover, unnecessary. He denied that its necessity had been shown. The Queen's speech, the speeches of ministers to their own constituents, bespoke safety and fair prospects; the country had had no disasters; but when money was wanted, then the master of all the ministers came down to the house with vague alarms and dark intimations of danger. The hon. gentleman concluded a very eloquent speech as follows:—

Why, Sir, the Premier, so alarming upon the income tax, would be blandly plausible upon the Corn bill, about the "temporary" distress, and could talk calmly of its "temporary" causes—and avow his unfaltering reliance on the resources, the energy, the elasticity which England could yet exhibit. Sir, I here agree with him. And it is for that reason, I think, he has not made out a case for the infliction of this tax, unprecedented in time of peace, proved to be so fraught with multifarious mischief as to be utterly unendurable the moment hostilities were terminated—a tax which by its very advocates is declared to work injustice and inequality—a tax which will fall with the same pressure on the unimpaired resources of hereditary possessions and on the precarious subsistence of the comparatively poor—a tax which is attended with an inquisition almost as abominable as a religious one—a tax which vulgarizes oaths, which turns the gospel into an implement of finance, which offers a premium to perjury, and inflicts a penalty on truth—which spreads a net from which honesty and honour cannot escape, but in which fraud and falsehood cannot be caught—a tax which, of all the imposts devised by the most perverted ingenuity, is most prejudicial to the interests, most oppressive to the feelings, most subversive of the religious sentiments, and most revolting to the moral sense of the English nation. (The right hon. gentleman sat down amidst the most vehement cheering from the opposition, which was renewed again and again for some time).

Sir ROBERT PEEL then rose and commenced by reviewing the financial state of the last few years, and showed that the late ministers, who had come into office with a surplus of three millions, had quitted it with a deficit of five, making a difference of eight millions against the country. If those facts were substantiated, was there any exaggeration on his part? The last speaker had said, there had been no disasters. When had England ever sustained such a disaster as that which had just annihilated, with the exception of a single individual, the whole of the British force in one quarter of India? Was not some

decisive exertion necessary for enabling the government to repair so great a calamity? What, then, did he propose? A tax usually, indeed, reserved for war, but equally applicable to any other great emergency. He went through the substitutes proposed by Lord J. Russell, and contended that none of them were equal to the present emergency. He was, indeed, proposing a new tax; but he was remitting others to a great extent. He was reducing duties on articles of subsistence; and he entreated his agricultural friends to suspend their judgments upon this part of the subject, persuaded that he should be able, at the proper time, to shew the expediency of that reduction for all interests, including agriculture itself. He admitted that the income tax would raise more than the deficiency, but he wanted more.

But, Sir, I require more than what is necessary to meet the deficiency under which we now labour. Look at the state of the country with reference to foreign nations. Look at the war in India and China. We have to send six regiments to India, in order to maintain the honour and power of this country. This is attended with no little expense. Again, it should be borne in mind that as yet we had not come to the house for the supplemental estimates. I say the House ought to bear in mind these facts. It is not merely the deficiency with which we have to deal. The noble lord says correctly that the deficiency this year is 2,500,000*l.*, and that I propose, by the proceeds of the income tax and by the tariff, to obtain the sum of 4,381,000*l.* That is my proposal. In doing this it is my intention to apply a great portion of the surplus to the remission of other taxes, which press heavily upon the country, as well as to the removal of the duties upon other articles which interfere with the productive industry of the nation. Sir, I consider in proposing the adoption of an income tax that I give a great boon to the country—to the productive industry of the country—to the manufacturing, commercial, and trading interests of this nation. That is the measure which I, on the part of the government, have thought it my duty to submit to parliament. I wish this to be known, not only in the house of Commons, but I wish it to go forth to the country. I think the country ought clearly to understand my proposal. I think they ought to see through the motives of those who have raised an opposition to it.

On the subject of the reductions contemplated by the new tariff, he would reserve himself for future and fuller explanation. He admitted that an income tax must be inquisitorial; but it was necessary that honest men should be protected against the evasions of their neighbours. The last speaker had pleaded eloquently against the income tax; might not an equally touching picture have been drawn on the other hand, of the father of a sick family compelled by a new window tax to shut out the light and the access of air from his anguishing children? To be sure you might now get a loan easily, for the funds were high. But what had raised them?

The funds are high, because you have shown a disposition not to resort to a system of loans in a time of peace. The funds have risen; but throw out my income tax and ask for a fresh loan to cover your deficiency in the revenue, and you will see the force of the argument, that because the funds are at 9*l.*, you may wait a little longer and have a loan. No, that will depress the funds—that will prove a visionary scheme, and have the effect of sinking the funds. Funds are high while you maintain public credit, and all our disasters may be repaired while there is a conviction that you are willing to meet your difficulties.

He was not fairly liable himself to be taunted for having said that on the success of these measures the fate of the government must depend; nor yet his friends, who, approving of the general principles of his administration, consented to yield their own opinions upon particular points. Some men might prefer one form of government and some another; but he agreed with Lord Melbourne that of all governments that was the worst which, lacking power to carry its measures, was content to linger out its existence upon the forbearance of its opponents.

On the motion of Mr BROTHERTON the debate was then adjourned till Monday.

Monday, April 11.

RIGHT OF PETITIONING.

The adjourned debate on this subject was begun by Sir R. PEEL, who opposed the reception of the petition, on the ground of the ancient usage excluding petitions against pending taxes. If that usage should be rescinded, great obstruction to public business might be the consequence. It was true that a resolution now existed against the debating of petitions, but that resolution had raised a usage of only five years, whereas the other was of 150. He was aware that much difference of opinion existed on this subject; but he thought himself bound not to abandon a practice of so long standing without taking the sense of the House upon it.

Lord HOWICK, Mr F. BERKELEY, and Lord F. EGERTON supported Mr Duncombe's motion, and Mr MILNES opposed it.

Lord JOHN RUSSELL, though reluctant to contravene a practice which had prevailed for 150 years, felt himself obliged, since the departure from the old usage of debating upon petitions, to support the motion of Mr Duncombe. He could not consent to maintain the customs of antiquity only on the side of restriction. Even if you should now shut out these petitions against the enactment of the pending tax, you could not shut out petitions next year for its repeal.

Mr S. WORTLEY supported the motion, and Sir JAMES GRAHAM, Lord J. MANNERS, Captain HAMILTON, Lord SANDOR, and Mr GOULBURN opposed it.

Mr DUNCOMBE said his object was to break down a practice which he regarded as unconstitutional, however it might be an ancient, one. No antiquity could sanction such an injustice. If this petition should be rejected, another would be presented next day; so that ministers would not be much advanced by their resistance. If they wished to exclude petitions, the manly way would be to move a standing order to that effect. The people disliked the pending tax, and the object now was to gag them.

The House then divided, and the numbers were, for the exclusion of the petition 222; for its reception 221; majority for the exclusion 1.

INCOME TAX.

Dr BOWRING commenced the adjourned debate. He rejoiced that he had not been a party to the policy which had produced the deficit now to be supplied. He had seen no occasion for the Syrian nor for the Indian war; but neither did he perceive any intention in the present ministry to terminate the hostilities in India. Still, if they had been content to assess income with some regard to its sources, he would have supported their measure; for he was persuaded that the principle of direct taxation was the true one; but he could not accede to the levy of an equal percentage from permanent and from transitory income.

Mr GALLY KNIGHT opposed Lord J. Russell's resolution, and Mr ELPHINSTONE supported it.

Sir WALTER JAMES protested against the protraction of these debates, which were suspending the whole commerce and manufactures of the country, embarrassing the capitalist, and starving the operative. In

such a state of things it was the duty of the House rather to act than to talk. He approved of the ministerial plan of finance.

Mr WALLACE contended that if Ireland was exempted from the income tax, Scotland ought also to be exempt.

Mr LIDDELL charged the whigs with having lessened the income of the country, and increased its expenditure; and also involved the country in disgraceful wars. He should support the measure of the present government.

Mr WASON intended, if this amendment was rejected, to move another for the exemption of income derived from industrial sources.

Mr C. W. WYNN supported the tax, on the ground that it was absolutely necessary to place the public credit on some substantial ground.

Mr MACAULAY believed it was true that a property tax was impracticable without an income tax; but the inequality and injustice of an income tax were such, that its imposition could be warranted only by extreme necessity. Mr. Roebuck had intimated that no man should object to disclose his income. That gentleman, in the position he held, might afford to indulge such a feeling; but that was not the sentiment of the great body for whom the House was legislating, and with whom the half of life was a constant struggle against the appearance of poverty. He adverted to the state of affairs in the East, and contended that this was not an exigency like that in which an income tax was imposed to protect the country against the nations of the continent leagued with France, when the navy estimates alone exceeded the aggregate charge of all the present establishments. He believed that, at this moment, England was better able to maintain a great war, than at any former period of her history; and yet, from the late course of the minister, the people of the continent might be led to suppose that England was in a state of the greatest difficulty and danger. He then touched upon the other resources which he considered as available for the present occasion. Sir Robert Peel had objected to a sugar duty on the score of slavery; but, considering what was done about coffee and cotton, and tobacco, he thought it a strong effort of charity to believe the hon. baronet sincere. Then as to timber, Sir Robert Peel had pitched over £600,000, at once, a greater blow to our finances than the disaster in India. Instead of founding an income tax to meet a deficit, the minister had made a deficit to found an income tax.

Lord STANLEY said that though the two sides of the House might disagree in their conclusions there was no difference in their premises; both admitted the greatness of the deficiency, and that the time for makeshifts was past. He admitted that a great emergency alone could justify an income tax, but contended that the present was a case of such emergency. He enumerated the different remedies proposed by different members on the opposition benches, and argued at great length against the efficiency of any and all of them. He acknowledged the inquisitorial nature of a tax upon income; but the bill imposing it would contain alleviations of this objection. And what would the noble lord, who proposed an increase of the assessed taxes, say to the inquisitorial nature of those assessments? The present call was made upon the country, not to pay off past debt, but to meet present annual expenditure; and so far from an unjust tax, he believed it to be both an equitable and a wise one.

Mr LABOUCHERE contended that the necessity now alleged by ministers was of their own creating, and that the income tax was a price which the country was called on by ministers to pay, for the continuance of the present system of duties on sugar and timber. Sir R. Peel was bringing out his tariff, as if he were the author of its policy, whereas it was the policy of his predecessors, and he was but taking advantage of the tide as it turned. He defended and applauded that feeling of liberty and pride which induces Englishmen to resist any measure of an inquisitorial nature. Of the tariff in general he approved, and would take his share of the responsibility attaching to the changes it would introduce.

Lord F. EGERTON condemned the delays by which members of the opposition were paralysing the trade of the country. He would support this measure on general grounds of confidence in the government; and specifically, because that government possessed in its councils that great man whose sword had achieved such successes in India as well as in Europe, and whose spirit, in his advancing age, still burnt with the brightness and clearness of his youth.

Mr Brotherton moved an adjournment.

Lord JOHN RUSSELL imputed the delays complained of to the party opposite, who had thought it more material to displace the late government than to discuss the import duties. As for the expedition to Afghanistan, he did not shrink from his share of responsibility; but the papers relating to it had been laid on the table last year, and no motion had been grounded on them by the opposite party.

Sir JOHN HOBHOUSE expressed himself to the same effect.

Mr Mark PHILIPS could not conscientiously support an income tax, unless upon some greater necessity, or with a view to some more extensive arrangement, than was now stated to the House.

Some desultory conversation then took place, and the debate was adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

The House met on Thursday and Friday evenings, but no business of public interest was transacted. On Monday Lord CAMPBELL moved the second reading of the three bills by which he proposed to transfer to the House of Lords the power at present possessed by the privy council, of hearing appeals, to reform the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords, and to render permanent the office of chief judge in the court of Chancery. The motion was opposed by the LORD CHANCELLOR, Lord DAVISON, and the Duke of WELLINGTON; and the amendment being carried without a division, the bills were read.

Many persons have expressed their surprise at the retention of Sir E. Knatchbull in the cabinet, after the other farmers' friend had been thrown overboard. A glance at the new tariff will solve the mystery; whilst all other articles of agricultural produce are reduced, the enormous and prohibitory duty on hops of £8. 17s. 6d. is allowed snugly to retain its place, for the exclusive benefit of Sir E. Knatchbull's constituents.—*Examiner.*

the new burdens were proposed rather for commercial than for financial purposes. It was under pressure of war, and under great and increasing deficiencies, that an income tax had on former occasions been imposed; at the return of peace it had always been removed; and there had been an understanding that it was to be reserved for seasons of war.

The difficulty which you had to encounter when the income tax was first proposed so far as finances are concerned, was of this nature:—For several years you had been engaged in war, and you were adding every year to the amount of your debt; borrowing money on very disadvantageous terms, and increasing every year, therefore, the interest of the public debt. In the year before the income tax was proposed, a loan of £15,000,000 was raised for the service of the year. In that year the assessed taxes were, I think, trebled; but there was this addition with respect to them, that every person who was obliged by those assessed taxes to pay more than one-tenth of his income should declare that such was the fact, and be thereby exempted from the payment of any overplus beyond that amount. In the following year, notwithstanding the imposition of those assessed taxes, which then produced more than £4,000,000, it was found that there was a deficiency of £10,000,000 for the service of the year. The pressure of the war required a very great effort to be made, and the minister of that day, having the House and the country with him in favour of the prosecution of the war, then thought it necessary, and I think rightly, not to go on increasing the debt in such an immense ratio, but to ask for a still further effort from the country in order to make the revenue nearly equal to the expenditure of the war. As soon as the war was over the succeeding minister, Mr Addington, came down to the house and proposed at once that the income tax should be discontinued.

No such difficulties as these existed at the present time. He then took a review of the objections to an income tax, and stated that it taxed the funds—that it was unequal in its operation—that it was inquisitorial in its nature. There was also a peculiar unfitness in the time of proposing it.

During the latter part of the time of war, from 1797, the currency was gradually more and more depreciated; and the consequence of that depreciation was somewhat similar to the effects recorded by historians as having been produced by the discovery of the precious metals, accompanied by this depreciation; the consequence of this was, an increase in the wealth of the trading community, but a hardship on those whose incomes were fixed; so that, from concurring circumstances, trade was better able to bear a tax of this sort at that period. But is that the position of affairs at the present period? Are you not dealing with trade, on the contrary, in a state of great difficulty—with trade at a time when there is only a hope of its recovery, but with scarcely any symptoms, certainly no strong signs, of that recovery? At such a crisis it must be peculiarly injurious that traders should have their affairs made known. I do not speak merely of individuals, but that which is injurious to individuals so circumstanced must be injurious to the community at large; nor can it fail to be very injurious to come upon men, perhaps already in difficulties, struggling with small capitals, and impose upon them the additional embarrassment of this inquisition and disclosure.

He admitted the necessity of providing for the deficiency, and specified several articles of consumption from which he thought a sufficient revenue might be obtained for that purpose. These were sugar, timber, and wheat; on the first £587,000, on the second £600,000, and on the third £530,000, might be obtained without pressure on the people. On coffee and timber, a needless sacrifice of revenue had been made. There were various other suggestions, most of which he thought preferable to the government plan; for instance, a duty on the succession to landed property, and an increase of the assessed taxes on four-wheeled carriages, male servants, and other items in the expenditure of the rich. He entreated the house to try every other source of revenue before they adopted the income tax, for once adopted it would not speedily be got rid of.

There is this extremely serious disadvantage in the income tax—you cannot impose such a tax, and proceed to collect it, without setting a great body of machinery in motion for the next five years. You will therefore incur all that expense and trouble, an expense and trouble perfectly unavailing for any other purpose, when the time shall arrive at which the income tax is to be repealed; but how marked the contrast between that and the assessed taxes; they can be as easily imposed as they are easily repealed. If you impose the income tax you will draw from the people £4,000,000 per annum. I say £4,000,000, for I think the right hon. baronet has greatly underrated the amount which he may expect to derive from this tax. Yielding then, as I think it will, a sum of £4,000,000 annually, I venture to say that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be in no great hurry to take off such a tax. We know that it is certainly imposed for three years—it is highly probable that it may be continued for five years—it is probable that the duration of the tax may extend to five or ten years.

He then went into the question of a fixed duty on corn, and contended that the late administration were not enemies but friends to the agricultural interest. He had never deceived the farmers, which was more than many of their professed friends could say. He concluded by asking whether an income tax of £4,000,000, and that a partial and unequal tax, was to be imposed, not for the necessities of the country, but for the avowed purpose of supporting an administration? If so, he thought the nation would ere long regret that they had elected a House of Commons which had so betrayed the trust reposed in it.

Mr GOULBURN hailed the admission of the noble lord that the deficiency must be provided for, and contended that it was not enough for the House to meet the mere present necessity; they were bound to regard the state of affairs in the East, and the probable expenses which the contests there would involve, and to place their finances upon a basis which would enable them to do justice to the country in future years. And it was Mr Pitt's opinion that an income tax was proper for this purpose.

It was clear that it was not the opinion of Pitt, that the income tax was to be considered only as applicable in time of war. He considered this mode of taxation as the most effective means of raising the public credit, and rescuing the country from the difficulties in which it was involved. The noble lord stated truly, that this tax was repealed by Mr Addington in 1802, at the peace of Amiens. The loans, however, which had been contracted during the war were provided for. Simultaneously with the repeal of the income tax, £1,000,000 of taxation was imposed on the country. £2,000,000 were derived from the malt tax, £1,000,000 from imports, and £1,000,000 resulted from assessed taxes. In this way a substitute was found for the property tax which had been repealed.

Lord Althorp, in later times, had declared the necessity of meeting a deficiency of £2,500,000, should it occur, even in profound peace, by the imposition of an income tax. In truth the maintenance of public credit was just as important in peace as in war, and a system of loans in peace was to be carefully guarded against—that system which had been so long the resource of the late government. He took up the objections urged by Lord John Russell against the income tax, and met them by the same arguments employed by himself and Sir Robert Peel in the previous debates on the subject. He then adverted to the budget of the late ministry, particularly to the proposed admission of foreign sugar, and stated the ground of objection to it to be the encouragement it would give to slavery and the slave trade. Even if the budget of the late ministry had been adopted, there would still be a deficiency of £2,000,000. Now as to the new suggestions of the noble lord. The first was a legacy duty on landed property.

There seemed an erroneous opinion to prevail, that nothing but personal property paid the legacy duty. He could assure the House that that was a gross fallacy. The legacy duty attached to all mortgages and other charges upon real estate upon their devise or descent. Of the legacy duty now received, a large proportion arose from

charges on the land. Another error seemed equally to prevail, viz., that all personal property of whatever kind paid the legacy duty upon succession. That was not so, for a large portion of personal property was exempt from that tax, as well as landed estate. But suppose they did apply a succession tax upon real property. From inquiries he had made upon the subject, he had found that the largest landed estates were settled in such a way that they would wholly escape any payment of the legacy duty; they were so tied up by marriage settlements and other deeds, that they would contribute nothing to a legacy duty. Those settlements made the holder of them a mere tenant for life of the property, and it was therefore not subject to the duty; and, if as much personal property were tied up in the same manner, even in the same deed, that property would be as free from the legacy duty as the greatest landed estate in the country. The tax, then, would fall, not upon the inheritor of large properties, but upon the small proprietor, upon those parties who derived their £100 a year from land, and who did not tie up their property by marriage settlements, because of their inability to bear the expense of stamp and other incidental charges.

By the best approximation he had been able to make, it appeared that of a total of about £8,000,000 produced in six years by the legacy duty, upwards of £3,000,000 had been yielded by the legacies charged on land; and he quoted a speech of Mr Baring, the late chancellor of the exchequer, corroborating these results. The noble lord had also recommended an increase of the assessed taxes; but such taxes did not, as he seemed to think, fall on the rich alone. The window tax, indeed, had once been a very productive one, but that was when the smaller class of houses was included, which in later times the government had been enabled to exempt; and it could not be desirable to bring back the poorer tenants into such an assessment. Full time had now elapsed for the people to form their opinions of the proposed measure, and he trusted that the House would enable the government to maintain by it the credit of the country.

Mr WILLIAMS (Coventry) disliked the income tax, but thought Lord John Russell had made out no very good case in his other objections to the ministerial finance. He had himself given notice of two proposals, both of which he thought better than those of the noble lord. First, he would propose on all inheritances or devises of land a duty equal to the probate and legacy duty on personality; and secondly, a graduated per centage on salaries and other incomes payable out of the public revenue. He calculated that these two measures would produce from £4,000,000 to £4,500,000, which would be sufficient to meet the deficiency.

Sir R. INGLIS would wish to leave out of consideration the first £150 in a person's income, and tax only the surplus—thus a man with £250 would pay on £100 only, and so on.

Mr STEWART and Sir W. SOMERVILLE opposed the tax, and Mr PALMER and Capt. HAMILTON supported it.

Mr SHEIL was persuaded of the people's generous willingness to come forward for the public safety; but it was a feeling of which the minister should be slow to avail himself. The minister had said, that unless he carried his tax and his tariff, he would retire; but his virtue was not likely to be put to that test. His first difficulty would be his success.

He does not now stand before us in the condition of a minister likely to meet with the difficulty of defeat. His difficulty is one of those which it is easy to encounter, and easy to conquer; but which is not so easily to be followed up. It is not now that the right hon. baronet has to fear, but when the income tax is in full operation—when the grievous burden is pressing on the people—when the full meaning of the words "income tax" is understood—when schedule D becomes perfectly intelligible—when the tax is viewed through the medium of experience, that best of all public instructors—when it is discovered that it makes levies from that "beneficial interest" (to use an expression very popular during the Irish debates) from which a man's subsistence is derived—when it is found out that no allowance is made for fire, for clothing, or for the roof that covers the Englishman's head—when the free-born Briton's privacy comes to be invaded by inquisitorial commissioners—when an investigation, taken on oath, is made as to the circumstances of an individual, whom your commissioners, general, additional, and special, shall conjecture to be worth more than £150 a year—when all the pain and oppression is felt—when, in one word, the income tax is brought home, then will be the time when the people will ask whether this measure is unavoidable; whether to any other expedient the minister could have had recourse; whether by the possession of power he was not tempted to its abuse; whether he did not avail himself of excited and enthusiastic majorities for the purpose of inflicting upon the country a tax, which neither from our present circumstances nor our future prospects was justifiable.

It was rash to increase the nominal deficiency for the purpose of supplying it with an income tax. The tariff should at least have been perfect to warrant such an impost for its sake. He then criticised the reduction of duty on timber, and the non-reduction of duty on sugar. Ministers talked of the foreign slave trade, and yet lowered the duties upon the coffee of the foreign slave colonies. The present deficiency had been charged upon the whigs; but it was not by the whigs that the debt had been raised to hundreds of millions. By them, on the contrary, taxes to the amount of £6,000,000 had been remitted. The Income-tax act, passed by the whigs of 1806, was framed to continue till the April following the treaty of peace, and no longer. It was a tax that had been condemned by the greatest authorities. It was unjust and oppressive, and was, moreover, unnecessary. He denied that its necessity had been shown. The Queen's speech, the speeches of ministers to their own constituents, bespoke safety and fair prospects; the country had had no disasters; but when money was wanted, then the master of all the ministers came down to the house with vague alarms and dark intimations of danger. The hon. gentleman concluded a very eloquent speech as follows:—

Why, Sir, the Premier, so alarming upon the income tax, would be blandly plausible upon the Corn bill, about the "temporary" distress, and could talk calmly of its "temporary" causes—and avow his unfaltering reliance on the resources, the energy, the elasticity which England could yet exhibit. Sir, I here agree with him. And it is for that reason, I think, he has not made out a case for the infliction of this tax, unprecedented in time of peace, proved to be so fraught with multifarious mischief as to be utterly unendurable the moment hostilities were terminated—a tax which by its very advocates is declared to work injustice and inequality—a tax which will fall with the same pressure on the unimpaired resources of hereditary possessions and on the precarious subsistence of the comparatively poor—a tax which is attended with an inquisition almost as abominable as a religious one—a tax which vulgarizes oaths, which turns the gospel into an implement of finance, which offers a premium to perjury, and inflicts a penalty on truth—which spreads a net from which honesty and honour cannot escape, but in which fraud and falsehood cannot be caught—a tax which, of all the imposts devised by the most perverted ingenuity, is most prejudicial to the interests, most oppressive to the feelings, most subversive of the religious sentiments, and most revolting to the moral sense of the English nation. (The right hon. gentleman sat down amidst the most vehement cheering from the opposition, which was renewed again and again for some time).

Sir ROBERT PEEL then rose and commenced by reviewing the financial state of the last few years, and showed that the late ministers, who had come into office with a surplus of three millions, had quitted it with a deficit of five, making a difference of eight millions against the country. If those facts were substantiated, was there any exaggeration on his part? The last speaker had said, there had been no disasters. When had England ever sustained such a disaster as that which had just annihilated, with the exception of a single individual, the whole of the British force in one quarter of India? Was not some

decisive exertion necessary for enabling the government to repair so great a calamity? What, then, did he propose? A tax usually, indeed, reserved for war, but equally applicable to any other great emergency. He went through the substitutes proposed by Lord J. Russell, and contended that none of them were equal to the present emergency. He was, indeed, proposing a new tax; but he was remitting others to a great extent. He was reducing duties on articles of subsistence; and he entreated his agricultural friends to suspend their judgments upon this part of the subject, persuaded that he should be able, at the proper time, to shew the expediency of that reduction for all interests, including agriculture itself. He admitted that the income tax would raise more than the deficiency, but he wanted more.

But, Sir, I require more than what is necessary to meet the deficiency under which we now labour. Look at the state of the country with reference to foreign nations. Look at the war in India and China. We have to send six regiments to India, in order to maintain the honour and power of this country. This is attended with no little expense. Again, it should be borne in mind that as yet we had not come to the house for the supplemental estimates. I say the House ought to bear in mind these facts. It is not merely the deficiency with which we have to deal. The noble lord says correctly that the deficiency this year is 2,500,000*l.*, and that I propose, by the proceeds of the income tax and by the tariff, to obtain the sum of 4,381,000*l.* That is my proposal. In doing this it is my intention to apply a great portion of the surplus to the remission of other taxes, which press heavily upon the country, as well as to the removal of the duties upon other articles which interfere with the productive industry of the nation. Sir, I consider in proposing the adoption of an income tax that I give a great boon to the country—to the productive industry of the country—to the manufacturing, commercial, and trading interests of this nation. That is the measure which I, on the part of the government, have thought it my duty to submit to parliament. I wish this to be known, not only in the house of Commons, but I wish it to go forth to the country. I think the country ought clearly to understand my proposition. I think they ought to see through the motives of those who have raised an opposition to it.

On the subject of the reductions contemplated by the new tariff, he would reserve himself for future and fuller explanation. He admitted that an income tax must be inquisitorial; but it was necessary that honest men should be protected against the evasions of their neighbours. The last speaker had pleaded eloquently against the income tax; might not an equally touching picture have been drawn on the other hand, of the father of a sick family compelled by a new window tax to shut out the light and the access of air from his anguishing children? To be sure you might now get a loan easily, for the funds were high. But what had raised them?

The funds are high, because you have shown a disposition not to resort to a system of loans in a time of peace. The funds have risen; but throw out my income tax and ask for a fresh loan to cover your deficiency in the revenue, and you will see the force of the argument, that because the funds are at 91, you may wait a little longer and have a loan. No, that will depress the funds—that will prove a visionary scheme, and have the effect of sinking the funds. Funds are high while you maintain public credit, and all our disasters may be repaired while there is a conviction that you are willing to meet your difficulties.

He was not fairly liable himself to be taunted for having said that on the success of these measures the fate of the government must depend; nor yet his friends, who, approving of the general principles of his administration, consented to yield their own opinions upon particular points. Some men might prefer one form of government and some another; but he agreed with Lord Melbourne that of all governments that was the worst which, lacking power to carry its measures, was content to linger out its existence upon the forbearance of its opponents.

On the motion of Mr BROTHERTON the debate was then adjourned till Monday.

Monday, April 11.

RIGHT OF PETITIONING.

The adjourned debate on this subject was begun by Sir R. PEEL, who opposed the reception of the petition, on the ground of the ancient usage excluding petitions against pending taxes. If that usage should be rescinded, great obstruction to public business might be the consequence. It was true that a resolution now existed against the debating of petitions, but that resolution had raised a usage of only five years, whereas the other was of 150. He was aware that much difference of opinion existed on this subject; but he thought himself bound not to abandon a practice of so long standing without taking the sense of the House upon it.

Lord HOWICK, Mr F. BERKELEY, and Lord F. EGERTON supported Mr Duncombe's motion, and Mr MILNES opposed it.

Lord JOHN RUSSELL, though reluctant to contravene a practice which had prevailed for 150 years, felt himself obliged, since the departure from the old usage of debating upon petitions, to support the motion of Mr Duncombe. He could not consent to maintain the customs of antiquity only on the side of restriction. Even if you should now shut out these petitions against the enactment of the pending tax, you could not shut out petitions next year for its repeal.

Mr S. WORTLEY supported the motion, and Sir JAMES GRAHAM, Lord J. MANNERS, Captain HAMILTON, Lord SANDOR, and Mr GOULBURN opposed it.

Mr DUNCOMBE said his object was to break down a practice which he regarded as an unconstitutional, however it might be an ancient, one. No antiquity could sanction such an injustice. If this petition should be rejected, another would be presented next day; so that ministers would not be much advanced by their resistance. If they wished to exclude petitions, the manly way would be to move a standing order to that effect. The people disliked the pending tax, and the object now was to gag them.

The House then divided, and the numbers were, for the exclusion of the petition 222; for its reception 221; majority for the exclusion 1.

INCOME TAX.

Dr BOWRING commenced the adjourned debate. He rejoiced that he had not been a party to the policy which had produced the deficit now to be supplied. He had seen no occasion for the Syrian nor for the Indian war; but neither did he perceive any intention in the present ministry to terminate the hostilities in India. Still, if they had been content to assess income with some regard to its sources, he would have supported their measure; for he was persuaded that the principle of direct taxation was the true one; but he could not accede to the levy of an equal percentage from permanent and from transitory income.

Mr GALLY KNIGHT opposed Lord J. Russell's resolution, and Mr ELPHINSTONE supported it.

Sir WALTER JAMES protested against the protraction of these debates, which were suspending the whole commerce and manufactures of the country, embarrassing the capitalist, and starving the operative. In

such a state of things it was the duty of the House rather to act than to talk. He approved of the ministerial plan of finance.

Mr WALLACE contended that if Ireland was exempted from the income tax, Scotland ought also to be exempt.

Mr LIDDELL charged the whigs with having lessened the income of the country, and increased its expenditure; and also involved the country in disgraceful wars. He should support the measure of the present government.

Mr WASON intended, if this amendment was rejected, to move another for the exemption of income derived from industrial sources.

Mr C. W. WYNX supported the tax, on the ground that it was absolutely necessary to place the public credit on some substantial ground.

Mr MACAULAY believed it was true that a property tax was impracticable without an income tax; but the inequality and injustice of an income tax were such, that its imposition could be warranted only by extreme necessity. Mr Roebuck had intimated that no man should object to disclose his income. That gentleman, in the position he held, might afford to indulge such a feeling; but that was not the sentiment of the great body for whom the House was legislating, and with whom the half of life was a constant struggle against the appearance of poverty. He adverted to the state of affairs in the East, and contended that this was not an exigency like that in which an income tax was imposed to protect the country against the nations of the continent leagued with France, when the navy estimates alone exceeded the aggregate charge of all the present establishments. He believed that, at this moment, England was better able to maintain a great war, than at any former period of her history; and yet, from the late course of the minister, the people of the continent might be led to suppose that England was in a state of the greatest difficulty and danger. He then touched upon the other resources which he considered as available for the present occasion. Sir Robert Peel had objected to a sugar duty on the score of slavery; but, considering what was done about coffee and cotton, and tobacco, he thought it a strong effort of charity to believe the hon. baronet sincere. Then as to timber, Sir Robert Peel had pitched over £600,000, at once, a greater blow to our finances than the disaster in India. Instead of founding an income tax to meet a deficit, the minister had made a deficit to found an income tax.

Lord STANLEY said that though the two sides of the House might disagree in their conclusions there was no difference in their premises; both admitted the greatness of the deficiency, and that the time for makeshifts was past. He admitted that a great emergency alone could justify an income tax, but contended that the present was a case of such emergency. He enumerated the different remedies proposed by different members on the opposition benches, and argued at great length against the efficiency of any and all of them. He acknowledged the inquisitorial nature of a tax upon income; but the bill imposing it would contain alleviations of this objection. And what would the noble lord, who proposed an increase of the assessed taxes, say to the inquisitorial nature of those assessments? The present call was made upon the country, not to pay off past debt, but to meet present annual expenditure; and so far from an unjust tax, he believed it to be both an equitable and a wise one.

Mr LABOUCHERE contended that the necessity now alleged by ministers was of their own creating, and that the income tax was a price which the country was called on by ministers to pay, for the continuance of the present system of duties on sugar and timber. Sir R. Peel was bringing out his tariff, as if he were the author of its policy, whereas it was the policy of his predecessors, and he was but taking advantage of the tide as it turned. He defended and applauded that feeling of liberty and pride which induces Englishmen to resist any measure of an inquisitorial nature. Of the tariff in general he approved, and would take his share of the responsibility attaching to the changes it would introduce.

Lord F. EGERTON condemned the delays by which members of the opposition were paralysing the trade of the country. He would support this measure on general grounds of confidence in the government; and specifically, because that government possessed in its councils that great man whose sword had achieved such successes in India as well as in Europe, and whose spirit, in his advancing age, still burnt with the brightness and clearness of his youth.

Mr Brotherton moved an adjournment.

Lord JOHN RUSSELL imputed the delays complained of to the party opposite, who had thought it more material to displace the late government than to discuss the import duties. As for the expedition to Afghanistan, he did not shrink from his share of responsibility; but the papers relating to it had been laid on the table last year, and no motion had been grounded on them by the opposite party.

Sir JOHN HOBHOUSE expressed himself to the same effect.

Mr Mark PHILIPS could not conscientiously support an income tax, unless upon some greater necessity, or with a view to some more extensive arrangement, than was now stated to the House.

Some desultory conversation then took place, and the debate was adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

The House met on Thursday and Friday evenings, but no business of public interest was transacted. On Monday Lord CAMPBELL moved the second reading of the three bills by which he proposed to transfer to the House of Lords the power at present possessed by the privy council, of hearing appeals, to reform the appellate jurisdiction of the House of Lords, and to render permanent the office of chief judge in the court of Chancery. The motion was opposed by the LORD CHANCELLOR, Lord BROUGHAM, and the Duke of WELLINGTON; and the amendment being carried without a division, the bills were lost.

Many persons have expressed their surprise at the retention of Sir E. Knatchbull in the cabinet, after the other farmers' friend had been thrown overboard. A glance at the new tariff will solve the mystery; whilst all other articles of agricultural produce are reduced, the enormous and prohibitory duty on hops of £8. 17s. 6d. is allowed snugly to retain its place, for the exclusive benefit of Sir E. Knatchbull's constituents.—*Examiner.*

GENERAL POLITICS.

FOREIGN.

FRANCE.

The extraordinary supplies required by ministers were voted by the Chamber of Deputies on Friday. On a division there were ayes, 220; noes, 143; majority for ministers, 77. An attempt by the opposition to postpone until the discussion of the budget, a question raised by M. Malleville on the subject of the *Recensement* was defeated by ministers.

The *National* recommends that the duty on British linen thread should be increased to fifty per cent., as a reprisal for the want of good faith shown by the British government, who promised to reduce the duties on French produce, on condition that the duties of British thread should not be raised beyond 10 per cent.

The French government had forwarded a strong remonstrance to the sovereigns of Tonquin and Cochin China against the persecutions of the catholic missionaries in those countries, and demanded that the latter should hereafter be suffered to discharge unmolested their evangelical duties.

SPAIN.

The Madrid journals to the 3rd instant have arrived. M. Patricio Olavarri, former editor of the republican journal *Huracan*, had addressed to the electors of Corunna his resignation of the post of deputy for their city, declaring that he should consider himself dishonoured by accepting a seat in such an assembly. The Minister of Justice had sent orders to the authorities on the French frontiers to arrest and remove to a distance of at least twelve leagues, into the interior of the kingdom, the vicars of Elisondo and Zugarramurdi, and several other clergymen residing in the adjoining districts.

PORTUGAL.

The Duke of Palmella has been formally appointed to negotiate the treaty of commerce, and also the slave trade treaty with Lord Howard de Walden, with whom his grace had a First interview on Friday. The urgency of settling the former question by a mutual reduction of the tariffs of the two countries is very great, as regards Portugal at least. The north is almost in a state of insurrection, owing to the stagnation of the wine trade. A very strong representation has been received from the commercial body of Oporto on the subject. In consequence of which the government has appointed a commission on the state of the wine trade, composed of the civil governors of Villa Real and Vizeu, the presidents of the municipal chambers, and heads of councils in the wine districts, and 24 proprietors or farmers to be chosen by the civil governors, twelve from each administrative district. This assembly is to suggest such measures as it thinks advantageous, after due discussion on the subject.

DOMESTIC.

METROPOLITAN.

The Queen held a drawing room at St. James's palace, on Thursday last, which was not very numerously attended. On Saturday, a court was held at Buckingham palace, for the reception of addresses on the throne; at which the address from the corporation of Dublin was presented by the Lord Mayor, accompanied by the officers and various members of the body, in their state robes.

The general body of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers of the three denominations were afterwards conducted to the throne-room, where the Rev. E. Henderson, D.D. read an address of congratulation to the Queen on the auspicious birth of a prince. Her Majesty returned a most gracious answer. The Rev. Dr. Henderson and the Rev. Edward Steane had the honour to kiss hands, and the latter rev. gentleman presented to the Queen the members of the body.

On Saturday, a vestry meeting of the parish of St. Mary-le-bone took place at the court house, for the purpose of considering the proposed income tax, as also the propriety of petitioning parliament against that measure, and for a repeal of the window duties, and all other assessed taxes; and was attended by Sir B. Hall, member for the borough. Several very able addresses were delivered on the anomaly and injustice of our present system of taxation, and the care with which taxation was made to fall as lightly as possible on the landed interest. A committee was then appointed to draw up a petition, and take such steps as might be deemed expedient, in opposition to the proposed income tax.

The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty have ordered twenty powerful fire engines to be constructed for the use of her Majesty's dockyards. Nine of these engines have been completed and sent to Woolwich dockyard to be proved.

The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty have ordered that a first-rate ship of war, of 120 guns, be built in the Woolwich dockyard, and, in compliment to her Majesty's illustrious consort, to be named the Royal Albert. This vessel will be built on a plan submitted to their lordships by Mr Oliver Lang, master shipwright of the yard, and will be constructed under his own immediate superintendence, on the slip from which the Trafalgar was launched.

The Commissioners of Woods and Forests have given instructions for new gates to be erected at each end of the new road from Kensington to Bayswater, and which is to be called the Queen's road. The high wall along the Bayswater road has been partly taken down to the level of eight feet from the ground, preparatory to the intended improvements on the site of the royal kitchen gardens, and it is intended to build a new church in the neighbourhood.

PROVINCIAL.

On Thursday last, a very numerous meeting was held at Gateshead, to take into consideration the propriety of petitioning the House of Commons and memorialising the Queen, in favour of a full, fair, and free representation of the people in parliament. Several able addresses were delivered on the right of the people to the possession of the franchise by the British constitution; the evils of class legislation,

which have reduced the country to the verge of ruin; the national debt; the extravagance of our governments, &c. &c. and resolutions on the above subjects were submitted to the meeting. On their adoption, Mr. Pratt moved a resolution to the following effect:—"That the only effectual remedy for the grievances of the nation, is to be found in the abolition of that fruitful source of all other monopolies, the monopoly of legislation; and, therefore, the representation of the people should be amended, by the extension of the elective franchise to the adult male population of the United Kingdom."—To this the chartists moved and carried an amendment, comprising the five remaining points of the people's charter, and several of their leaders expressed their distrust of the movement of Mr. Sturge. A petition, founded on the above resolutions, was resolved upon to be presented to the House of Commons by Mr. S. Crawford.—The *Gateshead Observer*, in reference to the above meeting, says,— "The meeting, altogether, was an improvement on preceding public assemblies on the Tyne, and we do not despair of a cordial union of the friends of freedom. We regret that the chartists, not content with including the six points of the charter, to some of which a portion of the requisitionists are opposed, should also have felt themselves obliged to exclude the Sturge memorial, to which the whole of them can subscribe. Surely it was unwise to Burke the memorial, and thus to trample on the alliance of the middle classes, so far as the middle classes were prepared to go. But we trust that the promoters of the meeting, undeterred by the ungenerous suspicions that were cast upon them, will manifest their devotion to principle, by subscribing the memorial, and transmitting their signatures to the Queen."

The Newcastle and Gateshead Anti-Corn-law association have memorialised the Queen against the corn and provision laws, the income tax, and the coal duty. The income tax has been denounced by a public meeting at York, where resolutions were passed pledging the meeting to abstain from the consumption of excisable articles while that tax endures.

Meetings have been held during the past week at the following places, in opposition to the proposed income tax: Manchester (of the town council), Plymouth, Chichester, Gateshead (of the town council), and Wooler.

The agitation in the agricultural districts on the question of the new tariff does not seem at all to have subsided. At meetings during the past week of the Chelmsford Farmer's club, the Perthshire Agricultural association of farmers at Moffat, of the Leicestershire graziers, resolutions, strongly denouncing the new corn bill and tariff, were adopted.

The Lincoln agricultural county meeting came off on Monday last, and was attended by about 1,600 persons. The sheriff, and many of the principal supporters of the government, attended with an ill grace, and the former refused to put a resolution to the meeting, denouncing the income tax. On his vacating the chair, the Earl of Yarborough was appointed to succeed him, and resolutions against the new tariff were passed with acclamation.

The farmers of Callington, in Cornwall, had a respectable meeting on Wednesday last, to protest against the new tariff, and express their want of confidence in the present government.

At the Gloucester assizes, William Jeanes was indicted for burglariously entering and setting fire to the house of the Rev. G. Sherer, at Marshfield, on the 19th of February last. This was a case displaying, on the part of the prisoner, unusual malignity, as it would appear that he had cherished the feelings of revenge to which he ultimately gave vent, by the attempt to burn the prosecutor's house, for nearly three years. It was evident the deed was the work of an incendiary, from oil having been poured upon the stairs and door. It was shown by the evidence of three several witnesses, that the prisoner, in the course of last year, being out of a situation, had said that it was in consequence of Mr. Sherer having refused to give him a character, and that he would "make him amends for it." To one witness he said, that if he was sure Mr. Sherer was in Bath, he would go to Marshfield, and rob or set fire to the house. The jury returned a verdict of Guilty. The moment the foreman uttered the word, the prisoner fell to the ground in a fit. He was removed below, and the reverend prosecutor, labouring under deep emotion, earnestly implored that his life might be spared, in which request the jury also joined.—Mr. Justice Cresswell ordered sentence of death to be recorded against him.

Robert Pierce, who was found guilty of different attempts to poison his wife at the North Wales circuit, was discovered to have committed suicide in Flint gaol on Saturday morning last, by suspending himself from the prison bars.

On Saturday, at York, the extreme sentence of the law was carried into effect on the bodies of Robert Hall and Jonathan Taylor, convicted at the last York assizes, before Mr. Baron Rolfe, of the murder of their wives.

A general strike of the seamen and coal porters of Lynn, in consequence of a threatened reduction in their wages, took place last week. The men paraded the streets in a body, and a few who were willing to work were prevented from doing so; but there was nothing in their conduct during the whole period, that could be fairly construed into a riot. Notwithstanding, the magistrates with the mayor at their head, sent to Norwich for the military. The soldiers started from the above city between 11 and 12 o'clock at night, and arrived in Lynn the next morning. The dragoons found the town perfectly tranquil; numbers of those whom they came to kill and slay being quiet spectators of their evolutions. The soldiers being sent to their quarters, the rural police, of whom there were about sixty in the town, turned out and captured seventeen or eighteen of the sailors and porters, and lodged them in gaol. Some were liberated on examination, and the others were sentenced to different terms of imprisonment. The seamen and porters are again peacefully at work at the reduced wages; and the soldiers are parading the streets, wondering for what purpose they came to Lynn.

At Stratford, upwards of 1,000 persons are employed in staymaking. After labouring 12 hours per day, their earnings do not amount to 2d. each.—*Times*.

IRELAND.

The tide of emigration has set in this season with even unwonted vigour. In no former years do we remember so many persons leaving this country for America. Hitherto the emigrants who have sailed from home have come from the inland counties; the spirit of enterprise has now seized upon those nearer home, and multitudes of men and women of these counties (Meath and Louth) are embarking, or preparing to embark, for the States. Favourable though we be to emigration, seeing that no other hope remains, yet we lament that those persons at present quitting our shores, and all too for Yankee land, are of a better class, and well provided with money, which being drained from this impoverished island, will, no doubt, in the aggregate, be severely felt, particularly in the country towns, where hitherto their hundreds used to circulate freely.—*Drogheda Conservative.*

SCOTLAND.

We understand that about 100 electors in this burgh, including the four present bailies, have attached their names to the memorial to the Queen, for "complete suffrage," and that the same was forwarded to Birmingham, to be disposed of by the deputies, who were to meet there on the 5th instant. It is understood that many more would have signed the memorial, had time permitted a more general canvass.—*Stirling Observer.*

Mr. Hume has been invited to offer himself for Montrose, in the room of Mr. Chalmers. The hon. gentleman, we moreover believe, has accepted the invitation, and has left London to present himself to the constituency.

INTERESTING EXPERIMENT BY THE HUMANE SOCIETY.—On Thursday a committee of this benevolent body met at Mr Berwick's brewery, Canongate, to assure themselves, by ocular proof, of the buoyant power of the life preserver called the "safety-cape," made by Messrs Macintosh of Manchester, for the Albion Cloth company, under the direction of one of the members of the skating club. Mr Berwick kindly filled one of his large cast-iron tanks or tuns, to the depth of six feet two inches, with water, at warm-bath temperature. A stout sailor, of five feet six inches, and about eleven or twelve stone weight, having put on the safety cape, went into the water with his clothes on, and to the satisfaction of all present, floated vertically at his ease with his head and neck and part of his shoulders above water. This he did without making the slightest effort to swim. Weights were then handed to him, which he held in his hands below water; seven pounds sunk him to the throat—eleven to the lip. The result is, that the safety cape has power to float two persons; or to enable a person wearing it to sustain another in the water who is not provided with it

POSTSCRIPT.

Wednesday, April 13, 1842.

In the house of Commons last night the subject of the right of petitioning was again brought forward by the Hon. W. Cowper, who presented a petition against the income tax, which brought on a lively debate in a very crowded house. Lord Francis Egerton recommended the adjournment of the debate, in order to afford time for a consideration of the subject, with a view to bringing forward a "standing order," and intimated that he himself would do so on Thursday, in the event of nobody else taking it up. Sir Robert Peel expressed his disposition to acquiesce in what appeared to be the prevailing feeling of the House; and Lord Mahon moved the adjournment of the debate till Friday, to which, the government having intimated that it would give way, Mr Cowper consented.

The adjourned debate on the income tax was resumed by Mr Brotherton who argued that the tax was unnecessary. He wished for no wars; he thought the trophies of peace more glorious. At all events he would not tax income equally with property. He would assess the funds, and all landed property, as it was now rated to the poor, only raising the rate from the landlord instead of the occupier. Colonel Wood supported the tax, and Mr Mangles opposed it. Mr Vernon contended that there was nothing more unequal or of greater hardship about the income tax than about any other rates and taxes. Mr C. Buller made the best speech of the evening. He thought it very ominous that the duration of the tax was now changed from three to five years, and considered it more likely to last for ten. He contrasted the conduct of the whigs and tories when in opposition, and accused Sir R. Peel of great unfairness in making, for the first time, an Indian deficit, of no extraordinary amount, a ground for imposing on this country a most unjust and inquisitorial tax, while a much larger deficit had existed for several years during the tory administration. He contended that the deficiency was not the legacy which the whigs left the country. The real legacies of that government had been religious liberty to the catholics and dissenters, emancipation to the negroes, municipal franchise to the towns, and freedom of commerce to the whole people. Mr Borthwick next addressed the House at great length, amidst much confusion and impatience; and the debate was then again adjourned, after Mr Masterman and Sir W. James had deplored, in strong terms, the injury caused to the commercial world by the delay. Sir Robert Peel and Lord John Russell promised to do their utmost to get the division brought on to-night.

In the House of Lords last night, Lord Melbourne gave notice, that on going into committee on the Corn Importation bill, he would move that a fixed duty would be more advantageous than a graduated one.

GREAT SUFFRAGE MEETING AT BIRMINGHAM.

The new movement has already been subjected to an important test and the result has proved favourable in a degree far beyond what we had anticipated. Birmingham, which witnessed the anxious deliberations of the delegates, has also seen the first triumph of the principles they have adopted. At a meeting in the Town hall, on Monday evening, several thousand persons held up their hands in approbation of the proceedings of the past week, and enthusiastically testified their delight at the prospect of a complete union of all honest reformers.

At about a quarter past six the organ gallery was nearly filled with respectable working men, and a considerable number of the middle

class who appeared to take great interest in the new movement. The side galleries were also filled, and in a short time the whole building presented one mass of human beings. Mr Sturge accompanied by Mr Lovett, Mr Vincent, Mr Warren, and a great many of the members of the conference entered, and were received with loud and vehement cheering, after which Mr Sturge took the chair, and observed that many of them would probably recollect, that when they first met to appoint delegates to the conference, it was stated that there would be two meetings held in that building. On that occasion, however, some few persons got into the hall and disturbed the meeting, in consequence of which the provisional committee thought it proper to decline holding the meetings which they contemplated during the sitting of the conference. They were aware that although the great mass of the people were friendly to the movement, some twelve individuals might at any time disturb a public meeting. As they had then, he hoped happily, come to a union with all true reformers, he trusted those disgraceful scenes would not occur again. He knew the names of a few individuals, and the countenances of others, who were in the habit of disturbing their meetings, and it was his fixed determination to publish their names, in order that it might be known who they were that conducted themselves in so improper a manner before their fellow-townsmen. Mr Sturge then read, amidst repeated cheerings, the resolutions adopted at the conference, which will be found in our advertising columns.

Mr Lovett was then introduced to the meeting, and delivered an address full of the soundest political truth, and breathing the very essence of toleration and right feeling. While he proclaimed his adherence to the great principles he had so long advocated, and expressed his determination to demand full justice for the people; he gave due credit to the liberality and honesty of purpose that had been shown by the moderate section of the conference; he denounced the crimes and follies of aristocratic rule, but at the same time he pointed out with an unsparring hand the faults and failings of a prejudiced though much injured democracy. And in dealing with both he was careful to discriminate between the blame due to a system, and to the individuals who in many cases are the unconscious tools of carrying out bad principles or perverting good ones.

Mr Warren next addressed the meeting, and in strong terms denounced the practice of war, and strenuously urged upon all present his individual advice not to enlist. The speaker took a rapid review of the horrible slaughters which had lately taken place in China and Afghanistan, and endeavoured to prove, from the geographical position of the eastern world and the superior advantages of the inhabitants of India and China, the almost inevitable certainty of a still greater sacrifice of human life in the event of renewed hostilities between the British troops and the Afghans.

Mr Mills of Oldham, Mr Martin of Leeds, Mr Kerr, and Mr Adam, spoke briefly.

Mr Vincent was then introduced to the meeting, and he was received with the most enthusiastic applause, which lasted some time. He delivered a very powerful and animated address, in which he advocated in the strongest possible terms the imperative necessity of carrying into their legislative system every principle contained in the resolutions of the conference.

On Mr Brontier O'Brien being loudly called for, that gentleman came forward, and was received with very general applause. He entered into an account of the manner in which he became a delegate to the conference, and goodhumouredly adverted to the forebodings he entertained of its success prior to its assembling; he, however, was bound to say, now it was all over, that after an experience of ten years agitation, he never was present at a public body where the deliberations were conducted with a greater spirit of fairness and thorough honesty. He never was present at an assembly where he witnessed so little malice, uncharitableness, or desire of self-interest. He was bound to say that some of the most important improvements had been suggested by the middle-class gentlemen of the conference. In the whole course of his career he never saw greater disposition to hear both sides, and decide impartially. On the whole he considered the new movement well deserving the support of every honest chartist in the kingdom; and he did most sincerely hope that so long as they continued in the course which they had marked out they would receive the full and entire support of the people.

Mr Lowrey who was called for by some of his chartist friends in the meeting, availed himself of his position in not having been a member of the conference, to give a fuller measure of credit to its proceedings than any of its members could have claimed. He ridiculed the idea of fighting for names when great principles had been recognised, and declared that it would be worse than infatuation on the part of any chartist to make an attempt to mar a movement so just and necessary in itself, and so promising in its commencement.

The meeting was also addressed by the Rev. Mr Solly, Mr Neeson, Mr Richardson, Mr Parry, and others.

The middle class men who spoke vindicated the independent character of the conference, and bore testimony to the honesty and ability of their chartist colleagues. They showed that the resolutions had been adopted, not because they had, or had not, been previously embodied in some plan of reform, but because after full discussion they had been proved to be founded on justice, and demanded by enlightened expediency. And they urged as a proof of the sincerity of the movement, that although concessions had been made on both sides, they were not made merely for concession's sake, but only from a conviction that while they involved no abandonment of principle, they were necessary for the promotion of the great object that all had in view.

Of the conduct of the audience it is impossible to speak too highly. Although wedged closely together, and many of them uncomfortably situated, they stood patiently for four hours and a half, making no noise except to signify their approbation of the sentiments of the speakers, and exhibiting no symptom of a wish to create the slightest disturbance.

CORN MARKET. MARK LANE, THIS DAY.

The supply is very small of all descriptions of grain, and the market is as dull as possible, scarcely a transaction having taken place.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"Observer" declined.			
"A well-wisher." We fear there is nothing doing in the metropolis.			
"William Matheson." Next week.			
Terms for advertising in the <i>Nonconformist</i> .			
For 8 lines 5s. 0d.	For 16 lines 7 0	For 24 lines 9 0	
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The Nonconformist.

LONDON: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 1842.

SUMMARY.

THE conference of Birmingham, which duly commenced its labours on Tuesday week, closed them on Friday evening, having sat about nine hours each day. The delegates who attended were scarcely so numerous as we had anticipated, but in every case in which they had been fairly chosen, they were men morally and intellectually worthy of the great cause in which they had embarked. We have no means of testing with accuracy the extent of the constituency represented, but there were persons of wide influence on both sides, and the result of their deliberations will, we doubt not, carry with it a greater amount of public opinion than any matter mooted since the passing of the Reform bill. We have given in another column our comment upon the proceedings of this body. We have only here to state in general that a "National Complete Suffrage Union" has been formed, which we expect will speedily absorb all the reforming energy of the three kingdoms. Such a result we are bound to add was very considerably promoted by the kind feeling, the calm temper, and a regard to the public welfare, evinced by the representatives of those who support the charter. If any one thing might be adduced as a sufficient proof of the safety and wisdom of confiding the franchise to the working men of the empire, the conduct of their delegates at the conference might be referred to with triumphant effect. Difficult as was their position, the part they took reflected equal credit upon their heads and upon their hearts; and proved that they are under the government of considerations, springing out of attachment to principle, and having no connexion, not even the remotest, with the purposes of faction.

It is impossible for us at this early period to anticipate with certainty the reception which the resolutions of the conference will meet with at the hands of the country at large. Judging, however, from the tone of the provincial press last week, we should imagine that the result of its labours will be hailed with acclamation. The organs of reformers appear to have looked forward with the deepest and most anxious interest to the decision of the assembled delegates, regarding the proceedings at Birmingham as affording the last ground of hope for the future well-being of Great Britain. A rallying point for all earnest men has at last been fixed upon; and a call has gone forth to all classes, like the blast of a trumpet, to summon our countrymen to a bloodless conflict on behalf of civil and religious liberty. We have only further to add, in reference to this subject, that our report of the proceedings, large as it is, is of necessity much condensed. We are happy, however, to learn that the full notes of our reporter, for which on account of the length of the discussions it was out of our power to find sufficient room, will be published in the form of a pamphlet, and circulated throughout the country.

On Wednesday evening, the House of Commons was occupied with a debate on the Copyright bill of Lord Mahon, the effect of which will be that the copyright of literary works is to continue 42 years at all events, and seven more from the author's death, when the 42 years shall have expired in his lifetime. On Thursday, Mr Duncombe brought forward a motion to discontinue the practice which precludes the presentation of petitions, respecting any tax or duty under the consideration of the House, when he was defeated by a majority of 31. On Friday he renewed the discussion; and from the relative strength of parties then present in the house, would in all probability have succeeded in his object, but for the interposition of that staunch friend of popular liberty, Lord John Russell. The noble lord, supported by Mr Aglionby and other whigs, procured an adjournment of the debate until Monday, when after further discussion the House rejected the petition by a majority of one!

These, however, are not the most important doings of the people's representatives. After the discussion of Mr Duncombe's motion on Thursday, the Corn Importation bill was read a third time and passed. An amendment, moved by Mr Cobden, to the effect "that the House having declared it impracticable to regulate the wages of labour, it is inexpedient and unjust to regulate, with a view unnaturally to raise, the prices of food," was rejected upon a division by 236 against 86. An attempt was then made to adjourn the House, which was defeated by a majority of 179. Dr Bowring then moved that the bill be read a third time that day six months, and the numbers on the division appeared, for the third reading 229, against it 90. On Friday, Lord John Russell, on the question that the report of the committee of ways and means should be brought up, moved the amendment on the income tax of which he gave notice some days since. The document itself will be found in our parliamentary report. Substantially it means this, that the whig budget of 1841 was greatly preferable to the tory budget of 1842, and that consequently it ought to be adopted by the House. His lordship's speech was distinguished by his usual ability, but presents for comment no novel topics, unless indeed his advocacy of a probate and

legacy duty on real property, and an increase of the assessed taxes on four-wheeled carriages, male servants, and other items in the expenditure of the rich, can be properly regarded in this light. It is a pity for the reputation of Lord John Russell that the thought did not strike him when he dwelt in the purlieus of office. It would have told much more powerfully for his sincerity, and for his real concern for the country's welfare. He was opposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in a speech made up of arguments which, during the present session, he has more than once kindly presented to the public, and was supported by Mr Shiel, who spoke "with his accustomed eloquence." After a spirited defence of his measures by Sir Robert Peel the debate was adjourned until Monday. On Monday the debate was resumed, and was again adjourned. The principal speakers were Dr Bowring, Mr Wallace, Lord Stanley, Mr Labouchere, and Lord Egerton.

The new tariff, however, is threatened with the most violent opposition. So many interests are touched by the Premier's plan, and so completely do the farmers believe their prospects to be involved, that we should hardly be surprised to find Sir Robert Peel, after having got through his income tax, beaten, not reluctantly perhaps, upon the substantial features of the new tariff. For ourselves we are not over solicitous about the matter; whether he is beaten, or whether he succeeds, he will equally raise an effectual opposition to the continuance of aristocratic oppression.

COMPLETE SUFFRAGE CONFERENCE.

OUR hopes are more than realised. The conference has closed its labours. The middle and labouring classes, through the medium of delegates fairly representing their wishes, have shaken hands. Union, under the happiest of auspices—union, after the fullest and most unreserved comparison of notes—union, on the basis of principles which root themselves in unchangeable truth—union of men on both sides, earnest for the welfare of their country, and disclaiming all taste for party politics, has now fairly commenced. That the aristocratic among the middle classes, that the factious among the labouring classes, will stand aloof, we have no doubt. So much the better. But that the movement begun last week at Birmingham will speedily absorb all the political virtue and reforming energy of the empire, and become effectual for the overthrow of class legislation, can hardly be questioned by any who will read the report of the proceedings, which it is our honest pride to present this week to the readers of the *Nonconformist*. It is a source of peculiar gratification to ourselves, that in the first number of the second year of its existence, we are able to point to these proceedings as the first-fruits of its establishment. The reconciliation now so happily effected, it has been a primary object with us to secure; and whilst we have no wish to conceal from ourselves that our efforts in this direction would probably have failed, but for the zealous, the indefatigable, the noble, the truly Christian exertions of Joseph Sturge, we cannot but reflect with peculiar satisfaction upon the part which we have taken in the origination and support of so hallowed an enterprise.

To our minds a more important mission than that which was entrusted to the delegates to this conference is not to be conceived. The grand experiment was to be tried, whether sound principle might not shake itself clear from the follies and the crimes with which it has of late been associated, by selfish and violent men, and stand forth to public view, clothed in all the attractions of its own inherent dignity and grace. The seed which so long has lain buried beneath a mass of impurities and corruption, has now by the force of its own vital energy pushed itself forth into the light of day—a beauteous and thriving plant, destined we fondly trust to bloom in loveliness and bear life-giving fruit. That which a short time since could scarcely be distinguished from the rubbish with which it was mingled, and by which it was concealed, begins to expand, to take form, to put forth leaves, to develop its intrinsic charms, to court and to win for itself the approval and admiration of every honest mind. Truth in the light of sincerity, peace, temperance, and benevolence, spring from whence it may, and whatever may have been the circumstances of its early history, must ultimately command the homage of mankind. It has come forth from amidst the loathsome feculence which had gathered about it, accompanied by all those who loved it for its own sake. The late fermentation has thrown the scum to the surface, and the Birmingham conference has had the happy effect of separating the precious from the vile.

It is impossible for us to do justice to the spirit evinced by both the great parties represented in this conference. Their proceedings were marked by a dignity worthy of the occasion which called them forth. In this respect it would be unjust to both, to award the palm either to the one or to the other. We shall speak therefore of the assembly as a whole, for the remarks we may have to make will apply with equal fitness to both sections.

During protracted discussions extending over four days the most conciliatory temper was evinced. Not once during the whole time did disapprobation of the sentiments advanced express itself in noisy clamour. No man who took a prominent part in the debates, strongly as he may have felt, failed to exhibit a courtesy of demeanour. Excitement which was intense, did not flame but glowed. With no lack of fervour, there were yet all the restraints which a due regard to the feelings of others imposes upon the minds of men. Disagreeable truths were not glazed over, but were uttered in tones more of sorrow than of anger, and were listened to with no irritability of spirit. The discussions were sharp and full of animation, but never trespassed upon the bounds of kindly feeling. The pervading anxiety of every heart appeared to be the future welfare of the country, and this swallowed up every anxiety.

of a meaner kind. There were consequently no outbreaks of passion, no effusions of bile, no violence of recrimination. Firmness went hand in hand with forbearance. The impetuosity of strong attachments was held back from headlong expression by the curb of consideration for the public good; and calmness, kindness, gentleness, and good temper, presided over all the deliberations of that assembly.

Nothing inferior to this was the exhibition of intellectual power. Great principles were discriminated from the mere details necessary to give them effect, and upon great principles all the more important resolutions of the conference were based. Speech-making, in the ordinary sense of the term, there was none, but able discussion. The speeches were all short, for the most part argumentative, and generally went with directness to the point at issue. Occasionally the length of the sittings produced fatigue, but no one complained of weariness. The speakers with few exceptions were listened to with profound attention. A far greater anxiety was displayed to give utterance to sound sentiment, than to make a pleasing jingle of mere words; yet was there no deficiency to be observed in point of appropriate expression. We have ourselves heard much public speaking, but we have never witnessed in this department such well sustained, inartificial, and impressive eloquence, as that which characterised the discussions of this conference. For, independently of the intellectual ability which was there at work, there was an earnestness of soul to work it seldom to be found in assemblies bearing much higher pretensions. It was this probably which imparted such unusual interest to the discussion, and much of this, unhappily, it is impossible for any report to convey to the reader.

It will be seen that the conference has affirmed and adopted all the leading principles usually thought to be involved in a system of perfect representation. We regret the necessity under which this has happened—a necessity, we verily believe, arising solely out of distrust produced by long alienation of one class from another. Could the representatives of the working men have brought themselves to believe in the full honesty of purpose actuating those who have taken a prominent part in this movement, had they been less trammelled by those influences which have been in operation for years past to bind them to all the points of the charter, we cannot but think they would have gained their end more speedily than under present circumstances can be reasonably expected. Three or four of their leading principles would have carried the rest, and would have made much more rapid progress amongst those who at present hold in their hands the electoral franchise. Such a necessity however existed, and the principles put forward being true in themselves, we think the conference has done wisely in consenting to their adoption. The choice lay between nothing, much, and most of all—between continued separation, union in policy which, though not the most effectual, will no doubt ultimately accomplish the ends in view, and that temporary concession by the working men which would have availed to purchase the present good-will of constituents. The last alternative, and as we think the best, was rejected by those who represented the working classes, the first was deprecated by both parties, the second has consequently been agreed upon; and having been agreed upon will, we hope, be acted out with honest vigour. For ourselves, dissenting as we do from the wisdom of the plan, we yet admire the wisdom of the conference in consenting under the circumstances of the case to receive it. We foresee many difficulties in the way of its success, and feel ourselves bound, therefore, not to refuse co-operation, but to labour with greater assiduity and zeal to enlist on its behalf all sincere and right-minded reformers. We deem it but due to ourselves to record our dissent from the fitness and adaptation of the plan to win a speedy triumph, and due to our country and to the soundness of the principles involved to defer urging further our own views in this respect, and to render the little influence which we possess subservient to the accomplishment of the views of the conference.

On the whole, we entertain little doubt that the proceedings of this body will lay the basis of a wider and a happier change in the government of this empire, than any which the pen of history has yet recorded. A daily press, steeped to its very core with the basest venality, the hired pander of political factions, used by both sections of the aristocracy to debauch the public mind, may pass over these proceedings with contemptuous silence. Be it so. Let the organs of those who possess power, or who fight for it, continue their daily work of diffusing, to please their patrons, sentiments intended to incite the public mind to war and bloodshed. Let them prostitute for gold their intellectual power to minister gratification to the meanest passions of which human nature is susceptible. In the midst of their studied ignorance of what is passing, we make bold to tell them that a movement has commenced, which neither their neglect nor opposition can put down. The convention, of whose existence they would fain appear to be not cognisant, will hereafter be looked upon as the dawn of the brightest political era of Great Britain; and posterity will learn with surprise and shame that the boasted press of a free country, untrammelled by legislative swaths, but enervated by the vilest corruption, took no part in advancing the cause of full, fair, and free representation.

THE RIGHT OF PETITION.

A CURIOUS illustration of the value of this right has been brought out into relief by recent parliamentary proceedings. The prime minister develops a plan of finance which involves taxation of income to the amount of 3 per cent., together with the legislative construction of inquisitorial machinery odious to the feelings of well nigh every Englishman. He hurries forward a resolution embody-

ing his views, and thenceforth the petitions of the people must not be received. In a matter touching more closely than any other the interests of the community, silence is imposed upon all parties. In dumb submission, they are bound to await the decision of their own house. On all other matters, they are graciously permitted to express an opinion in petitions which are seldom read and never spoken to. In the disposal of their money, they are precluded by parliamentary etiquette from making known their wishes. Parliamentary etiquette we say—the musty customs of a house which never yet fairly represented the people of this country. These are held to be strong enough, in the absence of any law or standing order on the subject, to gag the public voice, and effectually to obstruct in its passage to the house that knowledge which ought at all events to constitute an important element in their deliberations. We have heard this defended on the ground that constituencies can communicate their sentiments to their representatives. But what are the unrepresented, the vast majority of the people of this empire, to do? They have no mouthpiece within the walls of St Stephens, and in the case of the imposition of taxes the right of petition is denied them. When once a minister has resolved upon taking money from their pockets, the small fraction of constitutional power with which they are invested is held in abeyance. Then, when it is most necessary for them to speak, with a view to check that extravagance which drains their own resources, then they must be silent. Parliamentary custom, more potent than right, than reason, than law, stands at the door of the house of Commons and tells the people that their prayers cannot be heard. Beautiful effect of class legislation! Could any means be devised by the wit of man better calculated to give full license to the representatives of a small section of the community to vote away in heedless profusion, at the beck of a prime minister, the property of the people? Against this pernicious system we are glad to see Mr Duncombe resolutely set his face. He may well afford to brave the charge of faction which both the great political parties in the house will endeavour to fasten upon him. The sympathies of the people are with him. He stands upon the strong ground of common sense. He has to fight a majority not at all careful of decorum as to the mode in which they carry their intentions into effect; and we trust he will persist in his spirited efforts, under the conviction that justice can never be obtained from our rulers until, by a wholesome disregard of conventional maxims, their position has been rendered too uneasy to be borne. We see no reason why what is called "faction" should be permitted only to one side of the House.

THE BREAKING UP OF POLITICAL PARTIES.

WE have heretofore expressed an opinion, that government by political party has not been without its benefits to the nation. It has constituted a medium of transition between feudal despotism and popular liberty. Upon the former it was a decided improvement, and seems to have been necessary as an agent for preparing the minds of the people for the latter. Out of the conflict of party, sound principles of government have, one by one, been elicited; and these principles, taken up simply as the basis of operations carried on by one political section against another, have thus become familiarised to the popular apprehension. The weaker force has been compelled to summon truth to its assistance, not from any decided attachment to it, but rather with a view to temporary triumph. Each in its turn has sent her forth to canvass on their behalf for public opinion, and happily the power they gained by her means alone they are unable to retain when they would fain dismiss her from their service. So many appeals have been made to the reason of the people, that the people have learned to confide in their own judgment; and they seem to be aware that the time is now come when that judgment should be able to express itself, without waiting upon the convenience of this or the other political leader.

Government by party is evidently drawing to a close. The country is no longer divided between whigs and tories. Allegiance to mere names is becoming obsolete. Every one now is doing homage to principles. There is not a single united party in the empire. The recent measures of Sir R. Peel have snapped asunder the last bonds by which the conservatives were held together. He may have his strong majority in the house—outside of it his *quondam* supporters are together by the ears. They are unlearning with fatal rapidity all the lessons which have been taught them of the necessity of supporting any line of policy which it might please their leader to adopt. Events are conspiring to convince them that tory government does not necessarily mean the protection of their interests, and much as they were disposed to sacrifice a nation's welfare upon the altar of party expediency, they are but little inclined to sacrifice their own. As to the whigs, they are nowhere; as a political section of the community they have become suddenly extinct, like a candle burnt down to the socket and gone out for want of nourishment to the flame. The same remarks may apply to the nation ecclesiastically considered. The church of England is divided, the dissenters are in a state of disunion and disorganisation. All the great parties are breaking up. The people are now looking out for truth, and principles opposite as the poles are about to come into collision.

We rejoice at this. We see in it a token for good. The present ferment will clear the political element of matter which only served to render it turbid; and when it subsides, as subside it will, the public mind will be freed from many noxious ingredients which have done little more hitherto than to render it opaque, and hinder the free passage of truth to the heart. Looked at through a party medium, everything was seen distorted and unnaturally tinged, and passions

O'Brien, James B., Wootton-under-Edge.
 Palliser, George, Finsbury.
 Parker, William, Leicester.
 Parry, J. H., London.
 Potter, Thomas B., Manchester.
 Prentice, Archibald, Manchester.
 Pumphrey, Josiah, Birmingham.
 Redfern, F., Manchester.
 Richardson, R. J., Salford.
 Ritchie, Rev. John, D.D., Edinburgh.
 Rowland, O. J., Dundee.
 Rumney, Robert, Manchester.
 Sidey, Elias, Finsbury.
 Solly, Rev. Henry, Yeovil and Bridport.
 Smyth, John, Bradford.
 Snowdon, Winispear, Doncaster.
 Spencer, Rev. Thomas, Bath.

Stevens, William, Banbury.
 Stonehouse, John, Cranbrook, Kent.
 Stott, J. H., Edinburgh.
 Swan, Rev. Thomas, Birmingham.
 Taunton, William, Coventry.
 Thomas, William, Fairford.
 Thompson, F. J., Bridgewater.
 Tullis, William, Markinch.
 Vincent, Henry, Bath.
 Vines, Jabez, Reading.
 Wade, Rev. Arthur S., D.D., London.
 Warren, Frederick, Manchester.
 Westerton, Charles, London.
 Whittem, J. S., Coventry.
 Witherspoon, J., Kirkaldy.
 Wright, Thomas, Doncaster.

Mr W. MORGAN announced that the members of the provisional committee were entitled to sit in the conference, but not to vote.

The CHAIRMAN stated that a similar privilege would be granted to those forty members of parliament who voted for the amendment on the address to the Queen, and also to their Irish friends.

Mr DUNLOP (of Edinburgh) rose to move

"That the list now read be accepted as containing a correct account of the members of this conference, and that the following persons be a committee to whom shall be referred the claims of all persons desiring to be included therein:—Henry Vincent, Rev. John Jenkinson, J. H. Parry, John Ellis, Charles Westerton."

Having just returned from a mission to America, he rejoiced once more to stand on British ground. This land might have many faults but he loved it still. Free and intelligent as America was, she had something to derogate from it. The right of the people to universal suffrage had never been advocated in that country, though there was now some approximation to it [hear, hear].

The Rev. THOS. SPENCER (of Bath) in seconding the resolution said, that those who thought themselves very witty would laugh at the idea of a number of gentlemen and working men meeting together to reform the constitution of England. What they could not effect by argument, they would endeavour to accomplish by ridicule [hear, hear]. The present conference were undertaking a serious duty, and he wished to approach the subject with a full knowledge that it was a difficult one. At the same time he was not to be put down by the fact that there were persons who treat it with a sneer [cheers]. The most sacred things had been so treated. He could easily laugh at the House of Lords. He could laugh at being governed by a young lady. In short, there was nothing in this world which could not be laughed at, and he therefore despised the sneers cast upon an assembly like this. What they did would be small or great according to the result. If the cloud extended till it covered the whole firmament, it would not then be a subject for laughter [hear, hear]. Let them take such practical steps and show such practical wisdom, such self command and prudence in their deliberations, as would compel those who now sneered at them, to regard them in a different light. The adoption of the present resolution would be one of those practical measures [cheers].

The resolution was then put and agreed to.

Mr PARRY moved,

"That the following persons constitute a general executive committee to arrange the business of the conference, and to whom all papers and resolutions shall be submitted in writing, either before or during the session preceding the one in which it is proposed to introduce them, and such committee shall report at the close of each session the business to be introduced at the next session, which business shall always have the precedence:—Wm. Lovett, Rev. Thos. Spencer, Rev. Henry Solly, Henry Vincent, John Mitchell, Archibald Prentice, Fredk Warren, Robt Hardy, Rev. Noah Jones, Edward Miall, C. H. Neeson, Alfred Lawden. That the executive committee be requested to nominate a permanent chairman and secretaries to the conference for their election, and also to prepare a series of business regulations for adoption before the close of this session."

He wished to know what were the powers to be entrusted to that committee.

The CHAIRMAN replied that the only object was to facilitate the business of the convention. The only *veto* which the committee would have was, as to the time when particular resolutions should be brought forward.

Mr CHILDS of Bungay, in seconding the resolution, said that before the Reform bill was passed, Norfolk and Suffolk returned two members each—the former county, two whigs; the latter, usually one whig and one tory; but at the present time the two counties returned eight tory members [hear, hear]. Mr C. said, he could never remember the struggle for reform, before the Reform bill was passed, without mentioning, with respect, the earnest and consistent conduct through a long course of years, of Mr Coke of Holkham, (the present Lord Leicester.) To those on the other hand, who had fears for property if the working men were permitted to enjoy the right to vote, he could add his testimony to the fitness of the working men with whom, for forty years, he had had to do; during all which time, property of the most fragile character had been always in their hands—they might with the greatest secrecy have delapidated it, but no instance of the kind had ever occurred.

The resolution was then put and agreed to.

The SECRETARY of the provisional committee of the Birmingham Complete Suffrage association then read the report of the provisional committee of which the following is a brief abstract:—

"The committee deem it fitting to recapitulate the origin and course of their past proceedings, and to afford a slight delineation of what appears to be the state of the country in reference to the subject on which you are met to confer. Recurring to the rise of the present attempt to unite two dissevered classes on the question of parliamentary reform, it seems but justice to point to the declaration drawn up at the request of a meeting held at Manchester in November last. Had this been less comprehensive it would have been insufficient to prepare the way for any extensive and availing union—whilst, if encumbered with details it would have aroused prejudices and have opened questions of which the postponed decision rests more properly with the present conference. A little before the commencement of the current year, some individuals now of the committee, anxious to ascertain the prospect which might exist of uniting all classes in seeking a remedy for the evils inherent to, and occasioned by class legislation, had recourse for that purpose to the circulation of the declaration to different philanthropic and liberal minded men, and the favourable manner in which it was in most instances received, and the report of some efforts made to procure signatures to it, encouraged them in the formation of the provisional committee of the

Birmingham Complete Suffrage association for promoting, by peaceable and Christian means alone, a full, fair, and free representation of the people in the British house of Commons. They then endeavoured to ascertain how far the larger industrial portion of their countrymen could be induced to co-operate in such a measure. They issued a circular dated the 27th of January, in which they suggested the adoption and signature of a memorial to the Queen, embracing the sentiments of the declaration, and solicited an opinion of the propriety of holding the conference now assembled. No step has been taken without the advice and concurrence of many valued correspondents. The existence of wide spread distress, though recently for the first time admitted by all sections even of class legislators, and the extinction of all hope of relief from those in power, led the committee to suppose the minds of many would now become prepared to admit that both justice and expediency demanded that the parent evil of class legislation should before all others be grappled with and overthrown. A majority of the members of the council of the Anti-corn-law league were among the first to attach their signatures to the declaration. It should not, however, be supposed that these and other new converts constitute its chief strength; this must rather be sought for, and will be found in the case of men who have long been dissatisfied with the manifest injustice of any system of representation that excluded the majority from all share in their own government, but who have hitherto kept aloof from taking any active part in public affairs. Of the existence and rapid increase of this class, which includes many ministers of religion, and of their anxiety to promote a radical change in our national representation, the committee possess such evidence as satisfies them that the cause of the unenfranchised has a firm place in their hearts, and will receive from them an impress of their piety and worth. Extracts were then given from correspondence received by the committee justifying the above statements. The report then went on to state that between 16,000 and 17,000 names had been procured in Birmingham to the memorial including about 2000 electors. In various parts of the country as many signatures had been obtained as would go far to decide the fate of any candidate who should oppose himself to their views. Associations have been formed on, or have adopted, the views of the provisional committee as far as regards the extent of the franchise in many large and influential towns. About 200 ministers of religion of almost all denominations have signed the declaration or memorial. The committee would fail in their duty if they omitted to notice the invaluable service rendered to their cause by the series of able articles under the title of "Complete Suffrage," which have appeared in the *Nonconformist*. There will be those at the conference, and many others who have testified to the influence they have already exerted in convincing the doubtful, confirming the wavering, and overcoming their prejudices against a full representation of the people: they trust it will continue to be most extensively circulated. A recent article in the *Eclectic Review* approves all the points of the charter with the exception of annual parliaments. That both Scotland and Ireland will acquit themselves in peaceable efforts to advance this cause, may be confidently relied on. After deprecating in the strongest terms any resort to physical force for procuring national reform, the committee state, that without a rigid adherence to these views, and the recourse to all means necessary to a peaceful course of action, they would deem it worse than useless to attempt, by any combination of effort, to obtain the object they have in view. The committee would, however, desire nothing more than the exhibition of that self-sacrifice and devotion which has marked the attempts of men and nations to secure national reforms by martial enterprise. The report concluded by "expressing a deep sense of the responsibility resting on this conference, and of their share in connexion with it, which must be their apology for expressing a hope that throughout the whole of the proceedings the conference may act under the same impression."

The Rev. Dr WADE and Mr MORGAN expressed their approbation of the report.

Mr DUNLOP approved of the peaceful measures recommended being adopted; but he was not prepared to say that in all instances those were the only means to which recourse should be had.

A long conversation then ensued in which the CHAIRMAN, Mr COLLINS, Dr WADE, Mr VINES, Mr ADAMS, Mr PARRY, Mr CORBET, Mr DEWHURST, Mr STEELE, and Mr ALBRIGHT took part. They all condemned recourse to physical force, and a hope was expressed that no reference would in future be made to those outbreaks which had taken place in various parts of the country.

Mr HEYWORTH moved the adoption of the following propositions brought up by the executive committee.

"That the following constitute the business regulations of this conference:—

"That the chairman shall be allowed to take part in the discussion as a member of the conference, and shall have a casting vote in case of an equal division.

"That all documents issuing from the conference shall be signed by the chairman.

"That all documents or letters addressed to the conference or the chairman be referred to the executive committee.

"That all speakers be limited to 15 minutes each.

"That no member shall speak twice on the same subject except in explanation, or the opener, by way of conclusion in reply.

"That all amendments and propositions arising out of business under discussion be submitted to the chairman in writing at the time.

"That the conference shall meet twice every day, in the morning from nine o'clock to twelve, and in the evening from three to seven.

Mr COLLINS seconded the motion, which was put and agreed to, after which the meeting adjourned.

Evening Sitting.

Mr MIALL rose and said, It will not be necessary to preface the resolution which I have to submit to the meeting this evening with any thing more than a very few observations. The resolution itself is a speech, and it is intended to be the declaration of this conference against the principle of class legislation, and the evils which have resulted from it, in this country. Perhaps I may be suffered, first of all, to read the declaration, and then make any few remarks that it may be calculated to suggest.

"This conference hereby record their emphatic protest against class legislation, both in its principle and in its workings. Whilst the parliamentary franchise is restricted by arbitrary limits—whilst a certain section of the community, be it more or less extensive, is entrusted with the exclusive possession of legislative power, and without the consent of society as a whole, is constituted trustee of those rights which society may justly claim, there exists, in the opinion of this conference, no guarantee for fair and equitable government.

"The principle which invests a class with the peculiar attribute of choosing the people's representatives has no foundation either in Christianity or in reason, and in operation has been found to be productive of the most baneful results. It clothes the selfishness of human nature, against which government was designed to constitute an efficient protection, with legal sanctions. It draws a line of demarcation between man and man utterly subversive of the maxim propounded by the Great Author of our Faith, that 'All ye are brethren.' It gives to unprincipled men the means of working out, at the expense of social prosperity, their own selfish and unjust designs, whilst it places even the virtuous and benevolent in the position of representatives of those whose wants they cannot know, of whose feelings they are wholly ignorant, and with whom they are connected by nominal responsibility only. Experience has proved that the possessors of the franchise never have recognised the privilege they enjoy as held in trust for the advantage of the whole nation, and the limitation of the suffrage on a mere theoretical assumption like the one in question, has exposed the unrepresented to the greatest injustice, when, from the constituency which a property qualification creates, are withdrawn all those who refuse to place their names upon the register, those who having registered refuse to vote, and those whose vote is given in consideration of some personal injury to be avoided, or some personal benefit to be gained, it will be found that the trustees of the millions are but a miserable and powerless minority, and that the unrepresented may justly be considered as the slaves of slaves. Under this system, as might have been anticipated, political corruption has tainted the whole body of constituents. Freedom of choice has become a farce, and all parties have resorted, without scruple, to illicit practices, with a view to affect the character and complexion of the representative body.

"In the deliberate judgment of this conference the exclusion of any class from equal constitutional rights places that class in a position of political slavery, rendering their conduct, their movements, their social and domestic enjoyments, and even their religious convictions, subject, in a considerable measure, to the control of others who wield over them an irresponsible power. Between political and personal slavery the line of separation is so faint that the conference can hardly recognise any. Both degrade man from that position of independence in which his Maker placed him—in both there is the triumph of might over right—both tend to demoralise their victims, and then, under the pretence of restraining demoralisation, encroach yet more and more upon the liberty of the subject, whilst the palpable effects produced by both are in no slight measure analogous, each having resulted more or less directly, the one through the cupidity of slaveholders, the other through the selfishness of class legislation, in the forced violation of domestic ties and sympathies, and in the increased mortality produced by privation and hardship.

"In the view of this conference the interests of the nation at large have suffered incalculably from class legislation. Its evils may be seen in every department. It upholds, at an enormous expense, and to the serious injury of religion, a vast system of ecclesiastical despotism—it paralyses our commerce by the most absurd and unjust restrictions—it has narrowed the markets to our toil-worn industry, whilst it has enhanced the price of those articles upon which industry must necessarily subsist. It has undertaken without scruple, and in violation of all laws, human and divine, wars, draining the country both of blood and of money, and has so adjusted the taxation which such wars have rendered necessary as to touch but lightly the princely fortunes of the rich, and to take from the poor well nigh half their hard-earned wages. In a word, it has reduced this country, having in its possession all the elements of social progress and happiness, to the verge of irremediable ruin.

"Therefore, under a deep impression of the many and grievous evils inflicted upon the community by class legislation, and recognising the solemn obligations which rest upon them as men who are guided by the principles of Christianity, and as lovers of their country, this conference feel bound to exert themselves to put an end to the present exclusive system; and as they would hold themselves guiltless of the awful consequence upon which aristocratic government is rapidly driving the nation, so this conference would remind their fellow countrymen of the duty which Christianity imposes upon all its disciples, 'to do unto others as we would that others should do unto us'; and would enforce upon them the necessity of struggling for the practical observance of the principle of our constitution, 'That no subject of England can be constrained to pay any aids or taxes, even for the defence of the realm, or the support of the government, but such as are imposed by his own consent, or that of his representatives in parliament.'

I think after having proposed a resolution containing so much substantial matter, I might almost be excused from making any remarks upon the subjects which are brought forward therein. The evils of class legislation are so abundant, so various; they are now so fully and distinctly developed; they come out so prominently in the very face of society, that no time need be occupied at present in dwelling upon them. But a few only of these have been touched upon in the present declaration. Most, however, of the evils under which the country groans, and of which we complain, may be most clearly and distinctly traced to that principle which places the elective franchise as a trust in the hands of a limited and definite constituency. Whilst that franchise is considered in the light of a trust; whilst individuals not delegated by society, but rather delegated by some invisible power, existing we know not where—in the imaginations of man—have the capacity of electing for the rest of the nation the people's representatives, it is impossible but that individual selfishness, growing somewhat larger and more expanded, will be embodied and crystallised in the acts of the legislature. The right of every man to vote is surely sufficiently clear, without any long argumentation upon the principle that government is for the people and ought to be from them [hear, hear]. If we once admit the principle which has been so usually insisted upon, that all legislative power proceeds from the people, and that they are the proper fountain of power, there is no stopping short of universal suffrage. Class legislation must certainly be opposed to the spirit and the tendency of the whole principle. If we pass into society out of a state of nature, simply that we may accomplish thereby purposes which could not have been well accomplished whilst we remained in a state of nature, it is surely competent to us to demand that the very end for which we leave the one state for the other, shall be fully and perfectly accomplished; and we must be the judges after all as to whether that end is accomplished or not; nor can we give any practical expression to our judgment but through the medium of a vote for a representative in parliament. It is a departure from this simple principle that has led to so many practical evils in the working of our government. Error here has appeared to run through all the thoughts of men in reference to political subjects, and to tinge them all with its own peculiar colour—not a single act of parliament is framed in such a manner as to satisfy and to meet this one simple principle. We seem to understand that it is our right to legislate in respect to others, in so far as we may find it expedient to legislate for them. Legislation is but a necessity—ought to be regarded simply as the creature of necessity—ought never to be put forward or exercised in any way but with a view to meet some existing necessity; and if legislation were confined only within these just limits, which I believe the adoption of the principle contained in this declaration would ultimately secure, government would be a comparatively easy thing [hear, hear]. We now meddle with everything [hear, hear]. We meddle with religion, with education, with the distribution of food, with almost every conceivable thing by which a man's interest can be affected in this world; and we meddle with it just in such a capacity as will certainly spoil every one of the subjects which in such a capacity we touch [cheers]. And whilst we consider that property is to be represented rather than persons, and that government is a machine for carrying into effect what may be the notions of those who are in the possession of property, it is scarcely possible that a single act of parliament can be constructed, which will not have this vitiating principle running throughout the whole of it; and the whole course of legislation will be such as to

touch us in every point in the most inconvenient and oppressive manner [cheers]. It becomes us, therefore, at the commencement of a conference like this, to make a general declaration against the principle of class legislation and against the evils which it has inflicted upon the nation. There is no person probably who has attended this conference who is not prepared to go with us to this length. There is no one here surely who will contend that the suffrage ought to be restricted by anything like the limitations of property. If there be any restrictions whatever to the exercise of the franchise, those restrictions ought to be simply such as grow necessarily out of the right which is thus to be exercised [hear, hear]. It is a right that belongs to all. It belongs to them simply from the fact that they enter into society and are component members of it [hear, hear]. It is a right which is co-extensive with the relations in which they stand to society at large, and as such it should be bound by no limitations except those which the necessities of the case will absolutely require. Thus far I think we may go together. If we believe in these principles assuredly we can, without compromising our opinions in the slightest degree, give expression to our belief that a deviation from these just and enlightened principles has been followed in every case with the greatest evils; and that the state of the country, which is now upon the verge of ruin, is owing almost exclusively to the fact that while the franchise has been entrusted to the hands of a few, to be exercised with a view to the advantage of all, it has, in fact, always been exercised as though it were held as property, and not as a trust [loud cheers].

Mr H. VINCENT in seconding the resolution said, It will not be necessary for me to occupy the time of this conference at any great length, in support of a proposition so correct as that which has just been introduced to us. I take it for granted, that one of the principal reasons which has called us together is the conviction that is hourly growing in the minds of the people, that nearly all the evils to which they are subjected have arisen out of that monstrous principle of class legislation, against which I trust we have not only met to protest, but to build up a practical system of agitation that will speedily destroy it [cheers]. It is perfectly true, as detailed in the resolution, that class legislation has been productive of a variety of legislative ills. It is also true that the possession of political power by any particular class in society has had a tendency to build up in their minds a notion that they are individuals of a superior order to ourselves; while on the other hand it has had an equal tendency to degrade the characters of the great bulk of the population, by making them believe that they are beings of an inferior grade, unfitted for those high distinctions, and for those important privileges which God intended to be enjoyed alike by all the human family [cheers]. I believe that so mighty has the power of class legislation become in this country, that all our efforts to obtain a mitigation of the present system will be found perfectly useless; that all the means expended in an attempt to obtain a social and political justice for the people will be so much effort thrown away; until we have worked out a practical system of radical reform, which will give to the people themselves the power of controlling their own institutions, and thus enable them through the medium of their own enfranchisement to alleviate the burdens of which they so justly complain [cheers]. I rejoice to see this conference assembled. I have looked with considerable pain at the divisions which have so long existed in this country. But what has been the cause? Are the working men alone to blame? Has there not been a selfish desire on the part of those who possess political power to depress the working classes lower in the scale of social and political independence? But the assembly of a body of men like the present, in the town of Birmingham, amongst whom there are many who have not interfered so prominently as others, solemnly protesting against the injustice of class legislation, will have a great tendency to remove the causes which have hitherto kept the middle and working classes asunder. If you do more—if, as the result of your deliberations, there should be the construction of a measure sufficiently comprehensive and enlightened to win the approbation of parties, and call to your aid the assistance of the unenfranchised millions, then I feel that there will soon spring up in England an agitation so powerful, so overwhelming, that no government will be strong enough to stand against it—an agitation which can only end in the realisation of that political power which can alone destroy class legislation [cheers]. I hope that before this conference dissolves some measure calculated to give confidence to the working classes will be adopted. I feel that many of the working men are at this moment looking towards us with a degree of jealousy. I fear that some may imagine we have selfish objects in view. It is for you to throw aside entirely the calumnies which some would attach to you. It is for you to declare in the face of England that you are not met merely idly to protest against that which you have not the courage to assail; but by the extent of the measures which you adopt, and upon which you found your agitation, create that amount of public confidence which, while it will be strong enough to overawe the unjust institutions of the country on the one hand, will be able to put down the maliciousness of slander on the other [loud cheers].

Mr T. STEELE said that it might appear paradoxical if he affirmed that the present tory government had, without intending it surely, given more positive evidence than was ever adduced before of the virtue of the humblest part of the working classes [hear, hear]. Such, however, was the fact. The 40s. freeholders of the county of Clare had supported the election of O'Connell, and government in order to destroy their influence had found it necessary to introduce the £10 franchise [hear, hear].

The resolution was then put and agreed to.

The Rev. T. SPENCER moved,

"That inasmuch as the object of the conference is to concert the best measures for securing by Christian and peaceable means alone, a full, fair, and free representation of the people, the conference deem it incumbent upon them at the commencement of their proceedings, to examine the grounds upon which the right of representation rests. They affirm that every person being a member of society has an equal right with every other person to have a voice in the making of the laws which he is called upon to obey. They affirm that this just principle has already been recognised in the British constitution; for by various ancient statutes it is provided that 'no person be compelled to pay any tax, or make any loan to the king against his will,' and by a statute of King Edward the 3rd, it is declared that 'such loans are against reason and the franchise of the land.' These enactments are confirmed and expanded by the celebrated petition of right, which provides that 'no man be compelled to make or yield any gift or tax without common consent by act of parliament.' This right is further sanctioned by the dictates of that holy religion which teaches men to do to others as they would that others should do unto them. That therefore this conference, recognising the inherent and inalienable right of suffrage, and allowing only such

limitations as naturally arise out of the right itself, are equally applicable to all classes, and are necessary for the practical exercise of such right, agree to demand extension of the elective franchise to every man of twenty-one years of age, who is not deprived of his right of citizenship in consequence of the verdict of a jury of his countrymen."

He wished to disclaim the charge which was affixed to some of them, of having been lately converted to this cause. Ten years ago he held most of the principles which he now advocated. In the year 1830 he wrote in favour of universal suffrage, of electoral districts, of no property qualification, and of the payment of members. He did not then speak of annual parliaments, but his opinion was that every man should hold his seat during pleasure, liable to be recalled whenever he offended those who sent him to parliament [hear, hear]. Household suffrage had not worked to their satisfaction, and therefore they wished to change it. They had no desire to take the suffrage from those who now possessed it, but to increase the number of electors. They believed that there were many young men—barristers, men of science, &c.—who not having taken to themselves a wife, or a house [laughter], were under the present system disfranchised, but who were as capable of giving a vote as the largest householder in the kingdom [hear, hear]. They were equally opposed to the franchise being vested in freemen, falsely so called. The votes of honest men were neutralised by those of corrupt and bribed freemen. Some persons thought that 21 was too early a period at which to be entrusted with the franchise—that young men were hasty, giddy and rash; but on the other hand, men who were upwards of 60 were sometimes too cautious and too cold [laughter], and he thought the one might be considered a balance to the other [cheers]. If universal suffrage were adopted, it would be principally exercised by those between the ages of 25 and 60 [hear, hear]. What reason had they to suppose that if the suffrage were universal it would be improperly exercised? Whichever persons had the power of choosing, they generally exercised it wisely if they were uncontrolled. He had asked dissenting ministers whether, if all the persons in their neighbourhood had the choice of a minister, they would select the most religious or an irreligious man. The answer which he had almost invariably received was that the people, whether they were religious or not, would choose the best man for their minister [cheers]. The Rev. Mr Simeon, one of the greatest ornaments of the church of England, was chosen by the people incumbent of Trinity parish, Cambridge, when neither bishop, patron, nor chancellor would have given him the appointment [cheers]. It was said that the people were a mob, and could easily be led away. It must, however, be remembered, that it was the scribes, the pharisees, and the rulers, who sought to put Christ to death, while the common people heard him gladly [hear, hear]. But it was further urged as a reason against universal suffrage, that the people generally were ignorant. The proper answer to that was, instruct them [hear, hear]; and the best mode of doing it was by giving them the franchise. Men would not improve their minds until they had something for which to improve them. If it were said that the people were poor, then it was their duty to make such an alteration in the legislature as would take away their poverty. It was a disgrace to the nation that there were so many poor people in it. Another objection was, that persons would be sent to parliament who would make laws for granting extensive parochial relief. He was not the advocate of either the idle rich or the idle poor. To try to prevent pauperism was work enough for him [hear, hear]. Why was the new poor law wanted, but because the people had been already pauperised by the rich [hear, hear]? They had been told that the people were violent, but it was the wealthy who had taught them to use physical force. If two gentlemen in the House of Commons quarreled, they summoned each other to the pistol [hear, hear]. If there were a dispute between two kings, how seldom they tried to settle the matter amicably [hear, hear].

Mr WARREN, in seconding the resolution, expressed his entire concurrence in it. He contended that the use of violent language on the part of the poor, and that violent conduct which had been sometimes exhibited, arose from debarring them of their rights. Let the people be put in possession of them, and such occurrences would cease. When they saw men like the Rev. Mr Spencer standing forward in defence of the rights of the millions, what had they to fear [cheers]? An assembly like the present would cast the oil of peace upon the waters of strife, and allay the bad feeling which had hitherto existed. They were told that there were circumstances connected with the government of a great empire such as this, which should deter them from demanding that every ignorant man should have a right to meddle with them. Interests, however, which were now at stake would not exist if common honesty influenced the governors of the nation [hear, hear]. He was glad that the principle of universal right was beginning to be acknowledged by the gentlemen around him. It was only by such steps as they were now taking that the ruin which awaited the country could be averted. He had the most perfect confidence in the efficiency of the principles of peace for securing any object which had justice for its foundation [cheers].

The Rev. Dr WADE observed that he had four votes, and he considered that a shame while he was surrounded by many who had no vote at all. Workmen had been treated like draught horses, and a greater insult could not be offered to a rational and a religious being than to treat him as if he were a brute [hear, hear]. The poor wanted no charity, no gratuity; all that they required was social, moral, and political equality [cheers]. They must have civil before they could obtain religious liberty. Those who were now assembled would not do their duty unless they pledged themselves to exert their influence in procuring the franchise for non-electors. He would not vote for a man who would not pledge himself to support universal suffrage [cheers].

Mr PARRY contended that the right of all men to the franchise was derived not only from constitutional law, but from the very nature of things. Why should any set of men, hedged in by privilege and by class institutions, presume to say that they were superior to the rest of society? He believed that more besotted men came out of Oxford and Cambridge than from the meanest school of the lower orders [cheers and laughter]. Persons who contemptuously talked of the folly of giving the suffrage to brick makers and dustmen, did not sufficiently reflect that every man was useful in his sphere [hear, hear]. Some persons held that the working classes ought to be educated before they were endowed with the suffrage; but he contended that the possession of the franchise was a part of national education. The people never could be educated until they were placed on a level with other classes

of society. He did not, however, believe that they were so ignorant but that when endowed with privileges they would exercise them for the general good [cheers].

Mr ADAMS considered that the possession of the suffrage ought not to be limited to the payment of taxes. It ought to be regarded as a natural right.

The Rev. H. SOLLY concurred with Mr Adams. They never could touch a nation by urging expediency; they must do it by insisting on duty and right. The Creator had conferred a right on all, and it could never be surrendered but by the individual himself.

Mr BEGGS regarded all the political evils that followed in the train of class legislation to be light compared with the moral results. The infamy and degradation which existed in this land of bibles and religious institutions was a proof of it. But there was a considerable degree of integrity and moral worth in the working classes, if proper means were employed to develop them. Class legislation had been productive of a species of caste. They were told to educate the people, but how could that be effected, when power was vested in the hands of those who endeavoured to keep them in ignorance. The people were taught to bow, not to superior intelligence, but to the man who wore a better coat than themselves [hear, hear]. He trusted, however, that a better state of things was approaching. It was in the power of the middle classes, not only to make the working classes their allies, but with their aid to accomplish the overthrow of class legislation. Let them have a little more confidence in each other. Let them establish principles, and then yield their prejudices [hear, hear]. If the delegates did their duty to themselves and to those who sent them, peace and sunshine would be diffused over thousands of homes now languishing in misery and distress [cheers].

The Rev T. SPENCER was not satisfied with the words "convicted of felony" as they appeared in the resolution. A man might be convicted of felony, and yet in after years be a good and honest man.

A committee was then appointed to revise the resolution and withdrew for that purpose.

Mr CORBETT was delighted to see the spirit which had been manifested by all parties present. When he contemplated the severe suffering experienced by the working classes, and the amount of bankruptcy amongst the middle classes, he was persuaded that universal suffrage was the only remedy. That the former were capable of exercising the franchise judiciously was proved by their moral qualities. The poor were the greatest benefactors to each other in periods of distress [hear, hear]. A working man once remarked to him that the law compelled him, from the age of 18 to 45, to take up arms to protect the rich, but henceforth his motto should be "No vote, no musket" [cheers].

Mr PALLISER complained that the articles selected to bear the heaviest amount of taxation were those consumed by the poor; but if universal suffrage were obtained a *veto* would be put on such modes of legislation. He highly approved of the suggestion of Mr Spencer. One of the best and most trustworthy servants he had ever had in his employ, was a man who had been transported for seven years [hear, hear]. He was not acquainted with the latter circumstance till after the man's death [hear, hear].

Mr ELLIS of Mansfield, said that he had from 10 to 20 chartists in his employ, but he could place in them the most implicit confidence [cheers]. They would neither injure persons nor property [cheers].

Mr DEWHURST said, that as a working man he desired to hurl back with contempt the assertion that he was too ignorant to exercise the elective franchise. At the death of a peer of the realm his eldest son took his seat whether he was qualified to legislate or not. Because the son of a peer was born rich he was to be a legislator; because he (Mr D.) was involuntarily born poor he was to be oppressed all the days of his life [hear, hear]. The working classes built and beautified the houses in which the wealthy resided; machinery was principally invented and conducted by them. It was monstrous that men who never cultivated as much land as would grow a blade of grass, or spun an inch of thread, should tell him and the rest of the working class, that they were too ignorant to be entrusted with the elective franchise [loud cheers]. He then adverted to the privations which the poor were enduring, and the patience and forbearance with which they were sustained.

Mr COLLINS had been particularly struck by an observation made by Mr Miall in introducing his resolution, and which to his mind had placed the subject in a new light. The observation to which he alluded was, that experience proved that the elective franchise had never yet been recognised as a trust to be exercised for the well-being of the rest of society. He questioned whether it ever was intended to be exercised as a trust; on the contrary it should be placed in the hands of every man for his own benefit [hear, hear], and then the majority would be efficiently represented. He was delighted to find the gentlemen who preceded him take such high ground on which to rest the principles they were now discussing. If a chartist had dared a few months ago to talk of extending the franchise to those who had been convicted of crime, however penitent they might have become, he would have been regarded as countenancing everything bad and base [hear, hear]. When he was in prison he was called upon by a gentleman of title, who said, "You are a reasonable man; you cannot mean to advocate universal suffrage." Why not? "You would give a vote to the riff-raff; to all the thimble rig fellows who frequent our fairs." He replied that his argument would have some weight if they excluded from the franchise every dishonest £10 householder [loud cheers]. But if a man led a life as bad as that of Jonathan Wild, provided he was a £10 householder he was invested with the franchise [hear, and cheers]. It was a very extraordinary thing that those who charged the working classes with ignorance were the very persons who had done all they could to perpetuate it [hear]. The clergy of the established church received about nine millions per annum to educate the people, and now they came forward and declared that not having done their work, the people were too ignorant to be enfranchised. It was assumed that the working classes were not possessed of the milk of human kindness, but those who most associated with them knew their virtues. True, some had been guilty of excess, but it had been well remarked by a minister in that town, that whenever they reproved a working man he never attempted to justify or palliate his conduct, but stood before them self-condemned

[hear, hear]. If a hundred men were engaged in a factory, and money was to be placed in the hands of one of them—if ninety-nine out of the hundred were drunkards, the sober man would be selected for that purpose [hear, hear]. He believed that every man was entitled, both by conventional and natural right to assist in making the laws he was bound to obey [loud cheers].

Mr CHARLES CLARK defended the working classes from the obloquy which had been attempted to be cast upon them. The present conference had met, not to obtain any modifications of the new tariff, or the alteration of any law proposed as the result of class legislation, but to state their firm convictions that every man was a man [hear, hear], whatever his circumstances might be, and as such was entitled to all the privileges which others enjoyed [cheers]. He was very sanguine as to the beneficial results of their present deliberations [hear, hear].

The committee which had been appointed to amend the resolution returned and presented it to the chairman.

Mr RICHARDSON contended that upon the principles of constitutional law every man had a legal right to the suffrage. In Anglo-Saxon times that right was fully acknowledged. At the present moment it might be fairly contended that the Queen was elected by the suffrages of the people. When the accession of her Majesty was proclaimed, the archbishop appeared at Westminster hall, and turning to the four cardinal points, asked the people whether they would receive her as their queen, to which they responded, "Aye!" Suppose they were to pack Westminster hall with chartists, and in response to the archbishop cry, "No!" what would be the effect produced? The champion would ride out and challenge the multitude; but by their very numbers he would be compelled to retire [long continued cheers]. All that the people now demanded was, that they should be recognised as they formerly were in the laws of this country [applause].

Mr MIAULL fully accorded with the resolution as now amended. He thought it of the utmost importance that the right which they were now urging should be based upon an immutable foundation [cheers]. It made very little difference whether the constitution, which after all was only a conventional arrangement, did or did not sanction that which was in itself just [hear, hear]. It was of great moment that they should make known to the country that they were pursuing that which in their opinion was just, fearless either of prejudice or of consequences [hear, hear].

Mr ROBERT MARTIN said that the house of Commons, which was originally intended to represent the intelligence as well as the property of the state, had become a complete tool in the hands of the aristocracy, whereby they had been enabled to trample on the rights and privileges of the people. Labour was the foundation of national wealth; but the drones of society having seized upon the political power, had plundered labour of its due reward [cheers].

Mr CHARLTON contended that the possession of the franchise was the inalienable right of every Englishman.

Mr ROWLAND said, that the most important point of view in which this subject could be contemplated, was its bearing upon man's moral responsibility. He trusted that throughout their discussion that principle would be constantly kept in view.

Dr RITCHIE suggested that they were not now to appeal to old statutes and old precedents. They were met avowedly upon the principle that the statute book was heterodox, and, therefore, they were going to make one for themselves [loud cheers]. It was utterly useless to make any distinction between poverty and wealth. The poor man by his industry might in a few years become wealthy, while on the other hand a man of wealth might lose his property in a day. He advocated the object for which they were assembled, on the grounds of reason, religion, and humanity [hear, hear]. Those principles would go to the end of the world and back again, but they would never meet with an exception [cheers].

Rev. Mr SULLY suggested a verbal amendment, which was seconded by Mr CLARK, but afterwards withdrawn.

The resolution, as amended by the committee, in which form we have given it above, was then put and carried unanimously. After which the conference separated.

SECOND DAY, WEDNESDAY.

Morning Sitting.

The CHAIRMAN stated that since the last meeting he had received several other letters, approving of the object they had in view; among them was one from the venerable Thomas Clarkson, and also one from General O'Connor, whom he had lately had the pleasure of meeting in Paris, and an extract from which he begged to read:—

"I read with peculiar interest all that passed at the Complete Suffrage meeting at Birmingham, on Monday, the 21st. I am thoroughly convinced that if anything can save England from a violent revolution, it is the uniting the middling and productive working classes; for it is only by a firm and general co-operation of these two classes which, in fact, form the nation, the feudal primogeniture-aristocracy can be put down. Of all the human inventions that the wit of man has devised, this barbarous feudal aristocracy, is the most adapted to bring an industrious people to ruin. In no country on the earth, has there ever existed a faction, that has done anything like so much to create the misery of the industrious working classes as this primogeniture-squirearchy has done—especially, since the two ruinous wars against the Americans and French revolutions, in which such hundreds of millions of the sacred funds for the employment of productive labour were expended. The enormous taxes they have principally taken from the wages of the people, and the enormous debts they have loaded industry with; and to complete their work they usurped the whole political powers of the monarch and of the people by corruption, with bribery, with forgery, with drunkenness, with glutony, and with brutal violence, even to murder. Assuredly these doings, and the sight of the wide spread dreadful misery to which these doings have reduced the productive working class, must convince every thinking man, that if this destructive faction is not speedily put down, it will put down the people and every particle of their rights and liberties. You are taking the only possible peaceable means of effecting this immense good; I have seen with infinite sorrow and with indignation, that there is a set of profligate, ignorant, ambitious men, who are labouring to defeat your noble efforts by employing the most factious means to dissuade the productive working class from uniting with the middling class. In my mind it is not possible to conceive greater wickedness than this, nor can I conceive a more impious duty than the defeating such consummate wickedness" [loud and long continued cheering].

Never was he (Mr Sturge) more glad than at the adoption of the resolution last night. The fact stated by their friend (Mr Palliser), must have gone home to the heart of every one. He alluded to the faithfulness with which he (Mr P.) had been served by a man who had been transported 7 years. He implored the conference, if they could without the slightest compromise of principle, to make mutual concessions [loud cheers].

Mr ALBRIGHT called the attention of the conference to a pamphlet published by Mr Solly, in which he traced the evils under which the country was groaning, to feudal times.

Mr PRENTICE considered that the resolution passed last night would do much in forwarding the cause of thorough radical reform. The suffrage, however, could not be complete unless it were free, and they were now about to take into consideration the propriety of protecting the voter by ballot. That was a measure to which he would give his support. Another point to come before them was the equitable distribution of electoral districts, that also was a plan of which he approved. Manchester with its 10,000 voters had no greater share in the representation, than Harwich with its 150. He begged to move the following resolution:—

"That false principle of representation, videlicet, that of property and not of persons, having been acted on for a great length of time in this country, many abuses have thereby arisen and been perpetuated—that the removal of these abuses is necessary, in order to render the principles of complete suffrage, as defined in the preceding resolution, practically beneficial, and that, therefore, this conference do now proceed to consider the details which, in their opinion, are essential for rendering the representation of the people upon the fundamental principles already declared, full, fair, and free."

Rev. NOAH JONES, on seconding the motion, said that he fully agreed with Mr Prentice, that unless the ballot were adopted the resolution of last night would be passed in vain. Unless they could obtain a security for the free, safe, unfettered, exercise of their privileges, so far as the personal comfort and the worldly interests of thousands were concerned, the franchise would prove a curse instead of a blessing [hear, hear]. In this discussion they had to do with man as man—with man as a rational, social, moral being; and not with man in his circumstances. He hoped that that guiding star would be kept in view throughout the whole conference [hear, hear]. If they lost sight of it they would go back to the false principles of expediency, and be altogether wrong [cheers].

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously.

Mr R. GARDNER moved:—

"That inasmuch as it has been repeatedly declared by act of parliament that 'elections ought to be free,' this conference consider the removal of all undue influences upon the electors as absolutely essential, and are of opinion that the system of voting by ballot will most effectually secure that object."

He congratulated the conference upon the stand they took yesterday, by putting the principle of universal suffrage on so high and proper ground. They placed it on inalienable right, and did not make it depend upon any circumstances of taxation, constitution, or knowledge. Having thus swallowed the camel of universal suffrage, the meeting would not strain at a gnat [laughter, and loud cheers]. It was sometimes objected, that the introduction of the ballot would destroy the manliness of the English character. If it were merely to be a tyrant on the one hand, and a slave on the other, then he could conceive that such would be the case. There was too much play upon the word "open-voting." He was sure that the less that was said about elections, and the less open they were, the better. At all the elections he had seen, drunkenness and vice of every description stalked abroad with an open and decided gait [hear, hear]. He wished that all the crimes occasioned by the present system of voting could be put into the ballot box [laughter]. He believed, however, that the origin of those crimes might be so disposed of [hear, hear]. It was said that the ballot would induce a man to break faith with the person to whom he had promised his vote. But was there not falsehood under the present arrangement [hear, hear]? The only difference was, that in the one case a lie was told to the party unjustly requiring a vote, and who was far more guilty than the voter; and in the other a lie was laid on the altar of the country [hear, hear]. In the one case a man injured himself, in the other he injured the community [cheers]. He believed that the protection of the ballot was rendered peculiarly necessary in consequence of the present state of society, as well as from the inherent depravity of human nature. Mr Gardner then read an extract from the pamphlet, entitled "Reconciliation between the Middle and Working Classes," on the incorruptibility of the latter, and observed, that he knew of no method which would so fully secure the object there sought to be obtained as the practice of secret voting. The day might arrive when, as in America, the protection of the ballot would become unnecessary, simply because the human mind would be accustomed to consider every man's views of politics as a sacred and a holy thing. In the Lord's prayer they were taught to pray, "Lead us not into temptation;" but the direct effect of an aristocratic government was to lead them into it. Aristocracy aggravated all the bad qualities of human nature, whereas democracy did all in its power to mitigate them.

Mr TAUNTON felt that universal suffrage and the ballot ought to go together; but he would never give his sanction to the latter unless the former were added to it. So long as a certain portion of the community retained the exclusive privilege of voting, they held that privilege in trust, and therefore every one had a right to know how they voted [hear, hear]. He was most anxious that the ballot should become part and parcel of the present movement. The present system of class legislation engendered the worst evils—it gave to one man the power of being a tyrant, and having once exercised that power over a body of men, he assumed that it was his right, and others submitted to it [cheers]. The evil would only be removed by a full, fair, and free representation of the people. He begged to second the resolution.

The Rev. JOHN JENKINSON had found the greatest difficulty he ever experienced in his life in giving advice to parties in reference to the disposal of their votes. A good man was frequently compelled to vote contrary to the dictates of his conscience, and when he once began to tamper with conscience he was lowered in his own estimation, and rendered liable to be led away by other temptations. He considered that all the objections raised against the ballot were trivial. If a man had a right to the elective franchise, he had a right to protection in its exercise [cheers].

Mr T. STEELE was sure that gentlemen in England could form no conception of the necessity which existed in Ireland for the protection of the ballot. At the last Carlow election it was the duty of the electors as citizens to give their votes, but knowing the persecution they would suffer, a vote could not be asked for until a fund had been provided to preserve them from the tyranny of the landlords [hear, hear]. A gentleman had told him that he considered himself as much entitled to the votes of his tenants as he was to their rents [hear, hear].

Mr PALLISER suggested an alteration in the resolution. He demanded the ballot as a right.

The Rev. T. SPENCER said that the great use of an instrument was the extent to which it would promote the object intended. As far as he was personally concerned, he did not require the ballot, but there were numbers who did. There were medical men in the town of Bath who had taken their names from the registration list, because they dare not vote as they wished. The mayor of that city last year had been put to considerable annoyance in consequence of voting for the liberal members [hear, hear]. Thus it appeared that gentlemen as well as working men required the ballot [hear, hear]. At the same time he thought the ballot should be adopted merely on account of the weakness and imperfection of the present day. He trusted the period would arrive when every man would be able to give his vote openly, not caring who knew it [hear, hear].

Dr WADE said there was a class of people who might be regarded as a connecting link between the middle and working classes. He alluded to those men who, while they were employed elsewhere, kept small shops to which their wives attended; unless they voted in a certain way they were persecuted and oppressed, and on that account he wished for the ballot. It would prevent exclusive dealing [hear, hear]. Persons were often told to vote as they pleased; but at the same time they were advised to look to their interests. The hint was given so as to keep within the law, but yet it was most intelligible. Universal suffrage without the ballot would be an incomplete measure. The present system was a tree whose fruit was poison, and whose shadow was death; he therefore called upon them to hew it down [loud cheers].

Mr CUMMINGS must add his testimony to the ill effects of universal suffrage without the shield of the ballot. The voters, instead of being driven to the poll as they were now, by scores, would be driven by hundreds.

Mr ADAMS contended that under any circumstances the possession of the suffrage was a trust which ought to be placed under the influence of public opinion, in order that it might be properly exercised. He thought that too much stress was laid on the value of the ballot. Every man should be as free to go to the poll as he now was to attend a church or a chapel. It was only because it was absolutely necessary, that he would give his support to so bad a principle as secret voting. [hear, hear].

Mr GARDNER altered the original resolution to meet what he understood to be the objections which had been urged.

Mr VINES said that in Reading they had suffered much from the electors not being able to vote as they wished. The present members for that town would not have been in parliament if vote by ballot had been established [hear, hear].

Mr RICHARDSON wished to enter his protest, abstractedly, against the ballot. The disfranchising act of Henry the sixth was passed because the people met together too numerously. The only genuine principle of freedom was when a man could go to the hustings and say, "That is the candidate of my choice" [cheers]; necessity, however, compelled them to have recourse to the ballot under present circumstances [hear, hear].

Mr MIAULL was glad that the resolution had been somewhat amended, and that it now expressed their opinion in favour of an open system of voting whenever the state of public opinion would allow them to do it. Under the present system it might be absolutely necessary to come between a man's thought and the vote by which he expressed that thought, with some machinery whereby he might be protected from the evil to which the present state of society exposed him. But in his opinion they all over-rated the efficiency of the ballot for the purpose. He thought that even under the ballot parties would be deterred from exercising the franchise, lest, exercising the right of voting, they should be suspected by those who employed them of voting contrary to their wishes [hear, hear]. He was willing to allow of the ballot, inasmuch as the state of society seemed to call for it; but he must protest against its being considered as at all analogous to the principle of the suffrage, which he held to be a right inalienable, and consequently not to be compared with the mere arbitrary arrangement by which they sought to give him the means of exercising that right [hear, hear, and applause].

Dr RITCHIE said that it was a great evil to load a gun and fire at a man with bullet; but it was also a great evil to point an unloaded musket at a man, and thereby frighten him to death [laughter, and cheers]. The ballot was a protection to a nervous man. No man had a right to challenge another for his vote, but in the present state of society he deemed the ballot necessary.

Mr CHARLTON said that in Kidderminster tradesmen and others had been ruined for want of the ballot [hear, hear].

Mr BRIGHT preferred the resolution as it originally stood. He could see no more reason why a man should give his vote openly than that he should eat his dinner in public [laughter]. That plan was best which would most fully bring out the opinion of the electors [hear, hear].

Mr R. HARDY had been an advocate for universal suffrage during the last twenty-five years, but had had his doubts respecting the ballot. The only thing that ever made him a friend to it was, because the tories did not like it [laughter and cheers].

Mr COLLINS considered the ballot indispensable for the protection of the working classes.

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously in the following amended form:—

"That whilst this conference are of opinion that every man ought to be able and willing to give an open and conscientious vote, yet that, under the present circumstances of the country, and with the general prevalence of bribery and intimidation, they are of opinion that the system of voting by ballot will most effectually secure the free exercise of the suffrage; and they affirm that this system is sanctioned by acts of parliament, which have repeatedly declared, although the declaration is continually violated, that 'elections ought to be free.'"

Mr WESTERTON brought up a report from the committee appointed to examine the credentials of the delegates, stating that the committee had refused admission to eight persons, on the ground of informality of appointment, and requesting the conference to decide upon the subject.

A short discussion arose, in which several delegates stated that full powers had been entrusted to the committee, who had doubtless exercised a sound judgment. The report was handed to the secretary, and the conversation dropped.

Mr MITCHELL said that he thought the first act of the conference

was one of the most noble that could have distinguished the liberal movements of this country. It was very gladdening to know that so many of them had met there as the representatives of the electors of Britain, and had found it their duty to agree to a resolution in which was recognised the right of every man to an equal share in the representation of his country. Having unanimously agreed to such a resolution, it obviously followed as a matter of necessity, that in order to preserve their consistency, arrangements must be made by which their principles would be carried out in an efficient and effective manner [hear, hear]. He conceived that one of the most corrupted features of the present system was the unequal distribution of the electoral power. Although every man had the franchise, yet if the districts were not equally divided, many would, in fact, be disfranchised. He thought that the value of the resolution passed yesterday would very much depend upon the mode in which it was put into practice. He would therefore move:—

"That for the purpose of securing a fair and equal representation of the people, it is necessary that the whole country be divided into districts, each containing as nearly as may be an equal number of electors."

Mr MILLS, in seconding the resolution, said that some members of parliament were frightened at the idea of dividing the country into districts; but the kingdom was already divided into counties, and counties into parishes. Nothing could be easier, therefore, than to carry out the resolution.

Mr CHILDS enforced the necessity of a redistribution of the constituency, from the present state of the representation of the county of Suffolk compared with that of Manchester. The borough of Eye, in Suffolk, a mean town of about two thousand persons, returned one member; and the whole county, with all its towns, containing a population but little more than the town of Manchester, returned twelve members; while that great and populous place returned but two. A gentleman from Manchester had remarked on the aristocratic spirit so often manifested by the middle classes when prosperity in business followed them; to this spirit, to which Mr C. said he should not have ventured to recur if it had not been already mentioned by Mr Gardner, he must attribute the fact that the merchants and manufacturers of Manchester had sought a gentleman from amongst the Suffolk squires to sit for them in the house of Commons; but he (Mr C.) could not but feel that Manchester was left with one representative, while an additional member whose interests were identified with the aristocratic classes was thus added to the House.

Mr PRENTICE said that Manchester and Salford, containing 13,000 voters, returned three members. He had gone over other lists of voters, and found that fifty-two boroughs, returning seventy-two members, had not a larger number of electors [hear, hear].

The Rev. Mr JENKINSON, in corroboration of the remarks of Mr Prentice, read the following extract from a pamphlet entitled, "Our Rights, or the Just Claims of the Working Classes." The returns are taken from the census of 1830:—

"West Yorkshire, with about 25,000 electors, returns two members; Harwich, with 156 electors, also returns two members! The Tower Hamlets, with a population of 302,519, Dublin with 265,316, Edinburgh with 265,263, Marylebone with 234,294, Finsbury with 224,839, Glasgow with 202,426, and Westminster with 202,080, return two members each; Evesham, with a population of 3,991, Guildford with 3,813, Birmingham with 3,610, Honiton with 3,509, Thetford with 3,462, Totnes with 3,442, Bodmin with 3,375, and Wareham with 2,325, collectively return fifteen members; so that less than twenty-eight thousand persons can, in the legislative machine, cause nearly seventeen hundred thousand to kick the beam! These are extreme cases, but they are not solitary ones. Fifteen members are returned by constituencies comprising less than 200 electors each, fifty-five by constituencies under 300, one hundred and twenty-one under 500, one hundred and ninety-six under 700!"

The resolution was then put and agreed to.

Mr HEYWORTH said that no resolution could be more important and proper than the one he rose to move. Talent was not limited to any particular class of the community, and it ought to be at the command of the country whether it was found in one class or another. There was another reason why the no-property qualification should be adopted. A general knowledge of mankind could only be arrived at by allowing members to be sent to parliament who would carry with them the feelings and views of all classes. He begged to move,

"That in order to carry out the principle of freedom in election, this conference affirm the eligibility of all men chosen by a majority of votes to be members of parliament, without respect to the possession of property."

Mr O'BRIEN with great pleasure seconded the resolution. The only qualification that ought to be required in a member of parliament was the free choice of his constituents [cheers]. To give a constituency the right of choosing a representative, and at the same time to circumscribe the choice to a particular class, was to give the right with the one hand, and to take it away with the other. To establish a property qualification was like giving sparrows the right of choosing their protectors, but circumscribing it to hawks [laughter and cheers]. There was great prejudice on this subject pervading the minds of many people. They thought that if the representatives were not chosen from men of property, public property would not be safe. He was of opinion that the only way to make property secure was to place it in harmony with the rights of the people [hear, hear]. The real enemies to property were those who by the laws they made, prevented people from acquiring it by their industry [cheers]. The chartists were represented—or rather misrepresented—as being the enemies of property. He knew something of the chartist body, and as far as his experience went, he never knew an intelligent chartist whose objection to the present institution of property did not emanate from this—viz., that all parties were not equally free to acquire it [cheers]. The chartists considered that property enabled a man to acquire two different kinds of influence—the one legitimate—the other illegitimate. The former was obtained when a man by his wealth benefited his fellow-creatures. He could thus obtain an influence which the poor man could not command. But while they thus admitted the legitimate influence of wealth, they were determined to resist its illegitimate influence—viz., bribery, perjury, and intimidation. They held that men who abused property in that way, so far from having superior privileges to their fellow-men ought to have less. It was doubtful to some of the chartists whether such persons ought to have any property at all. It was a subject upon which they had not quite made up their minds [laughter and cheers]. They were ten thousand times more disposed to respect the property of those who regarded their rights than the property of men who regarded no one's rights [loud cheers]. When he entered that conference he expected to meet with men who would admit their principle in wholesale, and fritter it away in detail;

but his suspicions had proved groundless [cheers]. He had never been in any society—composed even exclusively of working men—in which he had found the democratic spirit more thoroughly developed.

Mr PARRY said that in passing from a bad state of things to a good one, it was advisable to know in what that bad state of things consisted. It was stated by Sir William Molesworth, when he made his motion for the abolition of the property qualification, that nothing was more common among certain classes, than to obtain a qualification by forged title deeds. Sir William Molesworth stated, that for £50 any man might procure a qualification; and yet persons talked about the rights of property. Under the present system the house of Commons was nothing better than a refuge for broken-down black legs [hear, hear].

Mr VINCENT believed that if the suffrage were important to enable the working and middle classes to have that just control over national affairs to which they were entitled, it was necessary to annihilate the absurd property qualification. If it were abolished to-morrow, it would by no means follow that men of wealth would be excluded from seats in parliament. If a man of wealth, honour, virtue, and Christian principle, stood opposed to a man of poverty, in nine cases out of ten the multitude, who ought to honour virtuous poverty, would vote for the former. If the plans now proposed were adopted, they would have a righteous and virtuous system of government founded upon integrity. He entered that conference with some degree of distrust as to the tone it might assume, but if they carried out the principles they had affirmed, and roused public opinion, based upon Christian principles, and purely peaceful modes of action, they must eventually overwhelm the power of corruption, and paralyse those who sought to live by disunion [immense cheers].

The Rev. T. SPENCER said that the proposition contained in the resolution was carried out in the universities of Cambridge and Oxford, and throughout the whole of Scotland.

Dr RITCHIE supported the resolution.

Mr T. POTTER thought that there would be no security for property unless the measures now proposed were carried. He then adverted to the distress at present existing among the working classes, both in Stockport and Manchester, and expressed his conviction that wages would continue to decrease until they reached the amount paid on the continent [loud cries of hear, hear].

The resolution having been put and carried, the meeting separated.

Evening Sitting.

Mr PARRY moved—

"That in the deliberate judgment of this conference, all election expenses and a reasonable remuneration to members of parliament for their services, ought to be borne by the state."

When a candidate was called upon to pay his own election expenses, those which were necessarily incurred, it naturally gave rise to the idea that he ought to be in a situation to do it. Joseph Hume, however, had never, upon principle, paid any election expenses. He believed that there was a great deal of misapprehension resting on the minds of the middle classes as to the payment of members. It was regarded by them as a most ridiculous thing; they thought there was no necessity for paying them. That principle ran throughout the employment of official persons. If the nation wanted anything done, persons were asked to undertake it gratuitously. The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Speaker of the House of Commons, and the Lord Chancellor, though they had enough to do in their own spheres, were asked to become trustees of the British Museum. It was a wretched principle, promoting a feeling of irresponsibility, inasmuch as the parties were not paid for their services. The payment of members had been supported by some of the greatest names recorded in history.

Mr WHITTEM briefly seconded the resolution.

Mr HEYWORTH, while he approved of members of parliament being paid, objected to the payment coming from the state. The executive would, in a short time, regard the members as their servants. The most economical mode would be for each locality to pay its own members. He would, therefore, move as an amendment—

"That it is the opinion of this conference that members of parliament ought to receive remuneration for their services."

Mr RICHARDSON seconded the amendment. He thought the member might be paid by the county treasurer.

Mr HODGKIN advocated the payment of members out of the taxes. Unless that plan were adopted there would be a difference between two members, one would offer to bear his own expenses, while the other would be paid by his own constituents.

Mr LOVETT supported the original resolution.

Mr BRIGHT had been told by a chartist that this was a point with which he was the least pleased. He thought the payment should come from the state.

Dr RITCHIE said that the man who lived for the public ought to be paid by them. If that was not common sense he knew not what was. Did any shopkeeper think that he was a dirty, shabby fellow, because he took the people's money for a good article [laughter]. They must look at the subject on the broad principles of equity. The man who was paid for doing his duty would discharge it far better than the one who was to be found at Crockford's or the Carlton club [cheers].

Mr O'BRIEN said, that if those who were sent to transact public business were not paid by the public they would pay themselves [hear, hear]. He would support the original motion.

Mr PALLISER, the Rev. N. JONES, Mr LINNEY, Mr SIDEY, Mr COOPER, Mr MIAIL, and the Rev T. SPENCER having expressed their sentiments,

The CHAIRMAN said that he had not made up his mind on the subject, but he was disposed to think that the payment should come from the state.

Mr PARRY having replied, the resolution was amended, and carried unanimously in the following form:—

"That in the deliberate judgment of this conference, all legal election expenses, and a reasonable remuneration to members of parliament for their services, ought to be borne at the public expense."

Mr W. SHARMAN CRAWFORD, M.P., having entered the room while Mr Parry was speaking, now rose, at the request of the Chairman, and spoke to the following effect: I thought it my duty to come to this conference to-day as a mark of respect. I gave notice of a motion on the suffrage some weeks since; but, understanding that this conference was to be held, I thought it advisable to postpone it until I knew the result of your deliberations. I ventured to leave my parliamentary

duties to-day, hoping that nothing of any great importance would occur in the house. I felt that my time could not be better spent than in hearing the opinions of the body here assembled [cheers]. I felt bound to give the notice to which I have referred, in consequence of the amendment which I moved last session to the address. But at the same time it is my wish to serve the cause in the best manner I can, and shall be happy to vary my motion in the way best adapted to secure that end [cheers]. I am aware of the responsibility of undertaking such a question, and I will not stand in the way of the conference fixing upon any other member to bring forward the great points which you are called to consider [loud cheers]; for I am anxious in every way to promote the advancement of an object which I have as deeply at heart as any one here [hear, hear].

The Rev. H. SALLY moved,

"That, in the opinion of this conference, it is highly desirable that the ancient constitutional practice of holding a new parliament once a year should be re-adopted."

They were all agreed as to the necessity of changing the present duration of parliaments. The grand argument in favour of annual parliaments was, the control which it gave the constituents over their representatives. It had been observed that one year was long enough to keep a bad servant (hear, hear). In a new state of things many would come forward as candidates who were previously unknown to the country at large; there would be strong motives to induce men to gain seats in the legislature; and therefore it was absolutely necessary that people should have a frequent opportunity of confirming or rectifying their choice. The opponents of annual parliaments admitted the weight of these arguments, but urged against them the confusion which would arise if the scenes which now presented themselves at elections occurred every year. The present evils, however, appeared to him to have their origin in the mode in which elections were conducted. It had also been said that annual parliaments would give the constituents too much influence over their representatives; that the latter might be in advance of the public mind in the measures they proposed, and that therefore the members might be rejected simply because the public were unable to appreciate their superior intelligence. He conceived, however, that it was the duty of representatives to instruct and enlighten the community, and not to carry such measures until they met with general approval. If that plan were not adopted, members would be the masters, and not the servants, of the public. The great body of the working classes had already come to a conclusion as to the importance of annual parliaments; and though many of the middle classes might think that biennial parliaments would be better, yet he trusted that there would be no great difference of opinion on the point, and that the resolution would be allowed to pass (cheers).

Mr RICHARDSON in seconding the resolution said, that it entirely accorded with his views. The principle of annual parliaments was as vital to the existence of society, as universal suffrage. The whole system of nature performed its annual course [laughter and cheers]. Annual parliaments were instituted as far back as the days of Alfred the Great. But he came to more modern times, Lord Eldon, when Mr Scott, thus delivered his sentiments respecting annual parliaments, in a speech delivered by him at the Winchester assizes—"The principle stands upon a rock of reason, and will, therefore, stand for ever—that the great body of the people should annually elect their public servants; and, therefore, it was that the great power of control by our excellent constitution, was always lodged in the hands of the people" [cheers]. At the passing of the Triennial bill the people protested against it; and when the Septennial bill was carried, bonfires were made, and the people of London went down to the house to execrate the members. They ought to return to the original state of things [cheers].

Dr WADE spoke in favour of the resolution.

Mr MIAIL said, that no one could rejoice more than he did in the feeling of harmony which had hitherto pervaded the assembly, but he must protest against the kind of arguments which had been used in reference to annual parliaments—viz., that it should be considered not simply on its own merits, but as forming an item in the system recommended by the chartist body. He believed that the working classes had great cause to be attached to the charter, and he respected them for their adherence to it; but in a conference like the present where they were assembled to discuss the soundness of certain principles, they ought not to be influenced by any reference as to whether such and such a measure would accord with the prejudices of this party or the other [hear, hear]. He regarded the point before them as a matter of expediency rather than of principle. Unless it could be proved that annual parliaments were absolutely essential to a full, fair, and free representation of the people, he thought that they were acting unwisely in taking it up in conjunction with matters which were based on principle and justice [hear, hear]. The great principle to be contended for was, that the representatives should be called to account sufficiently frequently to prevent their falling into bad practices without the constituents being able to apply a remedial measure. Whether that should be once in two years or once in three months, was a matter resting upon expediency and experience. He believed that a full and free representation of the people might be secured without making any specific provision in reference to the duration of parliaments. He would therefore propose the following amendment:—

"That this conference having affirmed the principle of complete suffrage, and having also declared that the following details ought to be adopted—viz. vote by ballot, equal electoral districts, abolition of members' property qualification, and the payment of members; and being further of opinion that for the purpose of securing the responsibility of members to the constituents parliaments ought to be of short duration, do agree to use their utmost exertions for procuring the passing of an act, embracing the fundamental principles and details already adopted, under which a parliament shall be elected to sit but one year, during which it shall determine the duration of future parliaments, and such other details as shall be necessary to constitute a real and fair representation of the people."

Mr TAUNTON in seconding the amendment quoted several extracts from M. de Tocqueville's work on America, with the opinions of Hamilton and Jefferson, as to the inexpediency of annual parliaments.

Mr COLLINS fully agreed with Mr Miall as to the propriety of considering every question on its own merits, but was favourable to annual parliaments. They had agreed to the principle of universal suffrage; but if triennial parliaments were adopted, young men who attained 21, immediately after the parliament was chosen, would be disfranchised for 3 years [hear, hear].

The Rev. T. SPENCER suggested that the difficulty would be met, provided in the case of a biennial parliament, one-half of the members retired every year. By this means they would secure a body of re-

representatives, one-half of whom were experienced in legislation. He was favourable to each electoral district being represented by two members. He would, therefore, move as an amendment on the original resolution:—

"That in the opinion of this conference, the people of England ought once every year, to have an opportunity of expressing their opinion respecting the proceedings of the legislature—that it is also desirable to preserve in the house of Commons, as much practical experience as possible, and that in order to unite these two objects, it is necessary that the members of parliament should hold their office for two years, one half of them retiring each year, and that each electoral district be represented by two members."

Mr T. WRIGHT, in seconding the amendment, expressed his conviction that there ought to be mutual concessions between the middle and the working classes.

Mr ADAMS agreed with Mr Miall that the great principle was that of recognising the responsibility of a member to his constituents. There were many modes by which it could be carried into effect. If the first parliament which was chosen did not do their duty, they would return to their constituents in twelve months who would at once reject them.

Mr DEWHURST supported annual parliaments. He was obliged to give an account to his master once a week, and therefore he had a right to exact of his servant, the member of parliament, an account once in twelve months [laughter].

The Rev. J. P. MURSELL supported Mr Miall's amendment. He considered the duration of parliament to be a matter of mere expediency.

Mr F. WARREN said that they had nothing whatever to do with America. That which was not applicable to America might be applicable to England. He was decidedly in favour of annual parliaments.

Mr MILLS was sure that if they wished to carry with them in this peaceable agitation the people of Lancashire, they must affirm the principle of annual parliaments.

Mr PARRY contended that no arguments could be urged in favour of biennial, which might not be adduced in support of annual, parliaments.

Mr BRIGHT feared that the frequent recurrence of elections would generate a spirit of disgust with them.

Mr MIALL had no objection to substitute another amendment for the one he had first proposed. It was to the following effect:—

"That it is of great importance to secure and maintain the responsibility of members to their constituents, and this conference is of opinion that annual parliaments are a proper means for securing this object."

Mr LOVETT moved the adoption of this amendment, which was seconded by Mr WARREN, and Mr Miall's first amendment withdrawn.

Mr BRIGHT then rose and proposed the following amendment.

"That in order that a due control shall be exercised by the electors over their representatives, it is the opinion of this conference that the duration of parliament should be short: and it further appears to this conference, that elections should never take place oftener than once a year or less frequently than once in three years."

Mr GARDNER seconded this amendment.

Mr O'BRIEN supported the original motion.

Mr POTTER was of opinion that the middle classes of Manchester, as a body, did not approve of annual parliaments; they considered the measure impracticable.

Mr NEESOM had for many years advocated annual parliaments. Under the contemplated changes they would have representatives who would do more good in one day than under the present system could be accomplished in a thousand years. The new parliament would go to work early in the morning, like sober sedate men. He presumed they would all be teetotalers [loud cheers].

Mr PALLISER was sure that if they carried annual parliaments, it would be said that they had adopted the charter, and the next point contended for would be its name [hear, hear].

Mr VINCENT said that whatever decision was come to it would be an honourable decision. There was no factious feeling on the part of any member of the conference [loud applause]. He was decidedly of opinion that annual parliaments would be the best.

Mr CUMMINGS supported the amendment of Mr Bright.

Mr DUNLOP said that the feeling of the people of Edinburgh was strongly against annual parliaments.

The Rev. H. SOLLY having replied,

Mr Bright's amendment was put, when there appeared 18 for it, and 45 against it.

On Mr Lovett's amendment being submitted there were 52 in its favour, and none against it.

The original resolution was then withdrawn amidst loud cheers.

The Rev. T. SWANN said that that sound of harmony would strike terror into the hearts of the monopolists. He begged to move

"That W. S. Crawford, M.P., be respectfully requested to introduce to the House of Commons a resolution affirmative of the principle of complete suffrage; and, that he be invited now to confer with this conference on the various points which he may think proper to include in that resolution."

Mr S. FOX seconded the resolution, which was put and carried by acclamation.

Mr W. S. CRAWFORD, M.P., who had retired, shortly afterwards entered the room, and was received with loud cheers. Mr MORGAN having read the resolutions adopted by the conference,

The hon. member rose and spoke to the following effect, I feel it is one of the greatest honours that could be conferred upon me to be selected by this body to bring forward these great questions which have been propounded in the resolutions. It is the next greatest honour to that conferred upon me by the constituency of Rochdale in their selection of me as their representative. I concur in all the great principles that are embodied in these resolutions [cheers]. They contain the great foundation of public liberty. If the people, in advocating their rights, do not base them on incontrovertible principles they can have no chance of success. I admit that there may be practical objections raised by some gentlemen to some points for which you contend, but those objections must yield to the great principles involved in them. It is not possible that any proposition in human affairs can be devoid of objections. You must balance the good and the evil, and take that course which in your opinion is least objectionable; for you cannot possibly have perfection [hear, hear]. It appears to me that the advocacy of your principles is that which is most likely to promote the rights and interests of the people; at the same time, kindness and forbearance should be shown to those who may differ from us [hear, hear]. The great foundation of human

liberty is the right of every man to maintain and express his opinions; and you should endeavour to convince those who differ from you by argument and reason, isolated from all compulsion [hear, hear]. I shall have great pleasure in bringing these propositions before the House of Commons; at the same time, I conceive it is my duty to do so in that manner which will be most conformable to the rules of the house, and will obtain for them the greatest support. I do not wish those who may not be the real friends of the people, but yet profess to be so, to be able to turn round and say, "We shall not vote for you because you do not abide by the forms of the house." I wish to avoid any opportunity for excuses of that kind, and at the same time let the people see who are the real supporters of their rights. I cannot, nor can any one here, be so sanguine as to expect that these propositions will be carried on their first movement in the house [cheers]. But the next point is, to secure for them the fullest and the fairest discussion so as to form public opinion both in and out of the house. It appears to me from a reference to precedents, that the most expedient course will be to bring in a resolution stating as concisely as possible the general propositions here propounded, and then to call upon the House to form itself into a committee for their consideration. When I return to London I will confer with those members of parliament whom I know to be the real friends of the cause, and consult with them on the best mode of promoting it. I shall avail myself of the petitions which have already been presented to the House this session on the subject. The hon. member then read a rough draught of the motion of which he proposed to give notice, which elicited loud applause. I do not, he continued, feel that the objects ought to be blinked in the resolution, although by pursuing that course more votes might be obtained. It is more proper that the demands of the people should be at once brought forward [cheers]. In advocating these principles I can read the resolutions which have been passed by this conference. I feel the great responsibility of the duty I have undertaken, but were it infinitely greater I am not one who would ever shrink from it [loud cheers].

The CHAIRMAN inquired on what day the hon. member proposed bringing on his motion, and whether it would assist him if a petition were presented from that body.

Mr W. S. CRAWFORD thought it would be very desirable to have a petition embodying the views of the conference, and he would then found his motion specially upon it. He thought it would give him great power and great effect in the production of the motion; but still it was not essential, because he could base it on other petitions. He proposed bringing it forward on Thursday or Tuesday fortnight.

The Rev. T. SPENCER asked the hon. member whether he thought he should carry with him the forty members who voted on the address.

Mr CRAWFORD thought they could none of them shrink from supporting it.

The Rev. T. SPENCER. Do you think you will have the power to provoke discussion?

Mr CRAWFORD. I think there are so many members interested in it that it will produce discussion.

The Rev. T. SPENCER. Is it your opinion that you will obtain a committee?

Mr CRAWFORD. No, I think the motion will be rejected.

Dr WADE moved:—

"That this conference present their thanks to Mr W. S. Crawford for his kindness in coming from London to attend this meeting, and express the deep confidence which this conference repose in him."

Mr VINES seconded, and Dr RITCHIE supported the resolution, which was put and carried by acclamation.

Mr CRAWFORD briefly returned thanks, and the meeting separated.

THIRD DAY, THURSDAY.

Morning Sitting.

The CHAIRMAN, in opening the business, said that before he took any part in the movement he felt convinced that the honest advocates of the charter only intended to procure a full, fair, and free representation of the people; and having arrived at that conviction, he felt it his duty, as far as he had any influence, to promote the object in view. At the same time, he knew there was great alarm excited at the name of the charter, on account of the improper conduct of some persons bearing the name of chartists. Few could conceive the difficulties there were in getting people calmly to reason upon the subject. He had thought that if they could agree to the first four points it would be desirable to have another conference rather than go into further detail. They had, however, proceeded beyond it. He was sorry that so many had come to the conference as pledged men, lest it should disturb the moral effect of any thing which might be done; but he trusted that the good temper which had been hitherto exhibited would continue to be displayed [hear, hear, and applause]. He trusted that as the result of that conference, those who candidly looked at the subject would feel that the honest part of the whole body of chartists wanted nothing but justice [hear, hear]. There were a number of chartists who were as anxious as the middle classes to get rid of the name. Persons, however, should not look at the name, but at the thing [cheers]. They must, as soon as possible, show their opponents that they had not come together merely to make a declaration of principles, but that they intended to carry their projects into execution [cheers].

Mr LOVETT rose and said, Most of the gentlemen present are aware that I have frequently declared my conviction that the principles and details of the charter are essential to the great end contemplated by our benevolent friend Mr Sturge; viz., a full, fair, and free representation of the people. As you are about to express your opinion on this very important subject, I trust you will approach it free from any class or individual bias. I am aware that the conduct of individuals has rendered the name of the charter unpopular, but remember that

"Truth would still be truth, tho' sun and moon
Were in the deep sea sunk." [cheers].

The name of the charter has been widely recognised by millions as an epitome of their political rights. They have been persecuted, and they have suffered for that name, and I think we should be doing outrage to the feelings of many were we contemptuously to spurn it. I am aware that the stigma cast on the principles of the charter has led some individuals, from the best and purest motives, to contend that a

declaration of principles is sufficient for all the purposes of political agitation. But such principles will have to be detailed by the present or some future House of Commons, and you know how they marred the details of the Reform bill [hear, hear]. A mere declaration of principle totally failed at the time Cartwright, Cobbett, and Hunt, agitated the subject. The people were divided—one contending for universal suffrage, another for household suffrage, and a third for the ballot, and thus they were pulling one against the other [hear, hear]. It was this perplexity, arising from an abstract principle, which led to the publication of the people's charter. In that document an attempt was made, not merely to embody all those principles that are deemed essential to secure a just and equal representation, but at the same time to work out those principles in plain and simple language. The result has proved that the step taken was a wise one, for it soon became the text book of the working classes; they have resisted all attempts to depart from it, and have signified their intention to agitate till they obtain it. I am not here to vindicate the conduct of those who, by their foolish acts, have retarded the measure; but have attended for the purpose of urging upon you the necessity of organising a combined movement in order to effect a cordial union, that we may, if possible, remedy the political evils under which we are all suffering. It is not because the charter has been the subject of discussion and revision in different political associations throughout the country; it is not because members of parliament and lawyers have taken part in suggesting, devising, and improving that measure; it is not because millions have determined to agitate till necessity, if not justice, forces it to become the law; but because it contains details of just legislation, that I urge upon you to recognise it, careless of all opprobrium, and fearless of all censure [loud cheers]. If you resolve to make common cause with the people I believe your union will be followed by an efficient instrument for promoting all good, for keeping back all violence, for healing all differences, and I hope for gladdening all hearts [loud cheers]. I beg to move,

"That this conference having adopted such just principles of representation as are necessary for giving to all classes of society their equal share of political power, and as the people's charter contains such details as have been deemed necessary for the working out of such principles, and has, moreover, been adopted by millions of our brethren as an embodiment of their political rights, this conference, in order to effect a cordial union of the middle and working classes, resolve, in a future conference (in which the whole people may be fully represented), to enter into a calm consideration of that document, among other plans of political reform, and if approved of, to use every just and peaceable means for creating a public opinion in its favour."

Mr MIAULL said—It will not be necessary at this advanced stage of our proceedings, to make the slightest apology for a public and fearless expression of opinion; and as I have not consented but offered to second the resolution moved by Mr Lovett, I feel it due to myself to preface that act by a few observations, which I trust will be taken in good part. I confess I have felt much of the difficulty alluded to by the Chairman at the opening of this meeting. I will confess that I think those of our working friends who are attending this conference are not acting quite the wisest and the most politic part for the accomplishment of their purposes. If they could have consented to have united upon the great principles which are involved in the considerations of truth and justice, leaving matters of detail to be amicably arranged hereafter, and bringing forward nothing which had upon it the stamp or badge of party, I think they would have carried forward the great object which they have at heart, much more rapidly and to a much more successful issue than can now be expected (hear, hear). Such not having been the case, it only remains for us to consider whether, on the whole, the great end we all have in view will be accomplished most effectually, by an entire separation of parties, or by an union which will compromise the consistency of none (hear, hear). I had understood it to have been the intention of Mr Lovett to have moved the adoption of the people's charter, and to that motion I should have given my firmest and most determined opposition. But the question having been brought forward in the present shape, shall I compromise my consistency by saying that I will hereafter, in connexion with other plans of reform give this plan my consideration—that what is good in it I will adopt, and what is evil I will reserve to myself the liberty of rejecting (hear, hear)? I have offered to second the motion in the hope that some modification of it will be proposed.

Mr O'BRIEN had no objection to an alteration being made in the resolution to the effect suggested by Mr Miall.

Mr ADAMS thought the reference to classes injudicious. He thought one object of the conference had been overlooked in a desire to gain another. The objects were two-fold—first, to come to such a resolution as should convince the working classes that they desired to confer upon them the same privileges as they themselves possessed; and secondly, to satisfy the middle classes who had not joined the movement, that there was nothing unreasonable in the demand which was made. It was through the middle classes that the measure must be carried if it were effected by peaceable means (hear, hear). He thought they would be better without the resolution at all, but if it were persisted in, other plans besides the people's charter ought to be included in it.

The Rev. T. SPENCER agreed with the last speaker that the conference had not acted wisely in entering upon this subject. Had he wished to become a chartist, he could have done so at Bath. He had shown his respect for the chartists, and had all of them conducted themselves like those present, many of the middle classes would have become chartists ere now (hear, hear). Some persons were determined to have the charter and nothing but the charter. The same thing was said with regard to the Reform bill. They were called together for one object, and they were now considering another. They were met not to consider the charter, but the plan of complete suffrage as suggested by Mr Sturge. If this resolution were carried it would be said that they had given the subject the "go by." He would propose an amendment, the adoption of which he thought would accomplish all they could desire. He would therefore move

"That this conference having affirmed certain great principles respecting complete suffrage and the mode of its free exercise, do request the Committee of the Birmingham Complete Suffrage association, at whose invitation they are now assembled, to take into consideration those details which may be adapted to the carrying out of the resolutions already agreed upon; and which may, if such committee should deem advisable, be made the subject of discussion for a future conference to be called for the purpose."

Mr LOVETT altered the resolution with a view to meet the wishes of Mr Miall and Mr Adams.

Mr VINES seconded the amendment. He was quite sure that if they adopted the name "chartist," it would impede their operations.

The Rev. T. SWAN thought there was a degree of modesty in Mr Lovett's motion; that there was by no means a desire to force the charter upon them.

Mr MITCHELL said that it occurred to him that the motion of Mr Lovett had been misunderstood. That motion did not stamp upon the document called "the people's charter" the approval of the conference. It merely suggested that on a future occasion it should be taken into consideration.

Mr DEWHURST was proceeding to defend the charter, and to argue for the retention of the name "chartist," when he was called to order by Mr Lovett, and resumed his seat.

Mr PARKER as a working man, representing a large body of his own class, thought it should be borne in mind by them that the object was conciliation (hear, hear). It was only by a majority of the liberal middle classes that they could obtain their end (hear, hear). The borough of Leicester was second to none in the advocacy of the principles of civil and religious liberty, and he wished the conference to come to a decision, whereby they might be enabled to elicit the services of every reformer in that place, and throughout England (cheers). It would be unfortunate for the working classes, if having gained their principal points they maintained a factious opposition (loud cheers). He entreated them to make it a matter of conscience whether for a name, which in itself was nothing, they would throw down the apple of discord and blast the interests of the working classes of this great country (loud cheers).

Mr O'BRIEN said it was not enough to lay down the plan of an edifice, it must be constructed. He agreed with Mr Lovett's amended resolution, though he could not have agreed to the original motion. He was anxious to merge the chartist body in a national one (hear, hear). He was not satisfied with the position which the chartist body now occupied; nor was he satisfied with the present position of the conference. He was abundantly satisfied with what the conference had done, but there was one thing still wanting—viz., that it should partake of a national character. What were the obvious means of carrying that out? There should be a body of delegates chosen from all the people of this country who were favourable to these proceedings. He was therefore anxious that there should be another conference in which all parties should be equally represented.

Mr COLLINS trusted that it would not be considered a factious opposition in him if he contended for what he believed to be essential to union. It was the most extraordinary idea that ever entered into the mind of man to say, that undertaking to consider the merits or demerits of any particular document would be a means of keeping influential men from joining them. Men of influence ought to be men of reason. Men of reason ought to examine and inquire, and then there would be a guarantee that they would come to a right and reasonable conclusion (hear, hear). He respectfully, but firmly, asked them to examine on a future occasion into the details of the charter.

Mr CUMMINGS was sorry to find that it was not a war of words, but of a word. A rose by any other name would smell as sweet (laughter). The prejudice under which he laboured was not with regard to the charter and chartism, but certain chartists who had brought the cause into marvellous ill odour. He lived in a town in which he could prove that there had been a coalition between the ultra tories and the ultra chartists (hear, hear).

Mr O'BRIEN rose to order. He believed there had been coalitions with the tories and also with the whigs.

Mr CUMMINGS knew that in a chartist meeting a person had not been allowed to speak, because he had on a clean shirt, and wore gloves (hear, hear).

Mr PARRY believed that if they overlooked the people's charter, they would never effect the desired reconciliation between the middle and the working classes.

Dr RITCHIE contended that no name ought to be adopted but that which would reconcile all parties.

The discussion was then adjourned.

Evening Sitting.

The CHAIRMAN submitted to those who were so justly anxious to push forward as far as they could the details of the charter, that the middle classes were with them in principle. He therefore wished that their chartist friends would give way a little if they could. He believed that the principles for which they were contending were founded on eternal right and must succeed; but it would depend in a great measure upon themselves whether they would be carried into effect this or the next generation (hear, hear).

Mr LOVETT thought that the original resolution might be so altered as to coincide with the sentiments of all parties. Mr Lovett then withdrew together with those gentlemen who supported his proposition, and after an hour's absence returned and proposed the following resolution as a substitute for that which he first moved.

"That this conference having adopted such just principles of representation as are necessary for giving to all classes their equal share of political power, resolve at some future period to call another conference in which the whole people may be fully represented for the purpose of considering any documents which embody the necessary details for the working out of the above principles."

Mr BRIGHT then submitted the following amendment, which was seconded by Mr LEES.

"That this conference having affirmed the great principles which are embodied in the foregoing resolutions, does not deem it expedient now to enter into a consideration of further details which may hereafter be found necessary to carry those principles into practical effect; but that the conference do now proceed to consider the best means by which those principles may be advanced in the estimation of the British people."

A protracted discussion then ensued, which ended in the Rev. T. Spencer and Mr Bright withdrawing their amendments, after which Mr Lovett's amended resolution was put and carried amid loud cheers.

Mr ADAMS read the draught of the petition to be presented to the House of Commons which was unanimously adopted.

FOURTH DAY, FRIDAY.

Morning Sitting.

The CHAIRMAN at the opening of the business read extracts from several letters approving of the objects of the conference. He thought it due to Mr Wakley to state that he had come forward voluntarily to

support any proposition which Mr Crawford might make in the house of Commons. Some friends thought they had cause to complain of the conduct of Daniel O'Connell. He (Mr O'C.) passed through the town yesterday, and had offered to attend the sitting of last night, but he (Mr S.) did not think it necessary to trouble him. He (Mr Sturge) would convey to him that he could promote the objects of the conference by recommending his Irish friends to vote for William Sharman Crawford's motion (loud cheers).

Mr STEELE had the authority of Mr O'Connell, for declaring that there were no constitutional efforts which he could employ, that he would not adopt in order to promote the object for which they were assembled (loud cheers).

The CHAIRMAN said, that in reference to the occurrences of yesterday, he wished to state that when he saw Mr Vincent and Mr Lovett announced as delegates, he felt it both a pleasure and a duty to afford them accommodation in his own house. After sending them an invitation, he thought it possible that as there was a section in the chartist body, and that his own motives were impugned, it might place them in an invidious position. He, therefore, wrote them to say that they were at perfect liberty to accept or refuse the invitation. They replied that their objects were honest and straightforward; they cared not what persons might say, and therefore would accept the invitation (loud cheers). When the executive committee was formed, he was anxious that their chartist friends should be fully represented. He was surprised to find the alarm excited on the subject of the charter being brought forward, but he thought that persons could not fully appreciate either the motives by which Mr Lovett and his friends were actuated, or the difficulties under which they laboured. It was due to Mr Miall to state, that doubtless after having offered to second Mr Lovett's motion, he saw the difficulty with regard to the pledge in question.

Mr LOVETT then moved and Mr KERR seconded the following resolutions:

"That an association be now formed to be entitled 'The National Complete Suffrage Union,' and that the following be its objects:—1. The creating and extending an enlightened public opinion in favour of the principle and necessary details of complete suffrage—viz., the extension of the elective franchise to every man twenty-one years of age, who has not been deprived of his citizenship in consequence of a verdict of his countrymen. The abolition of the property qualification for members of parliament. The adoption of voting by ballot. The dividing the country into equal electoral districts. The payment of all legal election expenses, and a reasonable remuneration to members of parliament—and that annual parliaments are a proper means for securing responsibility of members to their constituents.

"2. To invite all persons to become members of this union, who are favourable to the great principles of political equality—all who belong to every description of political association or society, for improving and benefiting the people—as well as persons of all creeds, classes, and opinions, who are desirous of seeing their country prosperous, enlightened, and free.

"3. To influence members of parliament in favour of our plan of complete suffrage, to cause it to be repeatedly and unremittingly introduced in the house of Commons, till such time as it is enacted as the law of these realms, to support those members who introduce it with petitions, memorials or remonstrances, and to carefully register the names of all those members of parliament who vote for and against it, so that the people may be fully made acquainted with the friends and opponents of their principles.

"4. To effect an annual enrolment of all electors throughout the kingdom. Who are favourable to our objects, and in all cases of elections for members of parliament, to advise or assist in the bringing forward and supporting all those candidates who may be approved of, and who will pledge themselves to vote for our plan of complete suffrage.

"5. To request the non-electors, in every town and borough throughout the kingdom, to exercise their influence and record their names in favour of all candidates pledged to complete suffrage.

"6. To oppose the return of every member of the present House of Commons who may not vote in favour of the motion which Mr Sharman Crawford is about to introduce, unless he pledge himself to vote hereafter in favour of our objects."

The first four resolutions having been unanimously adopted, a long discussion took place regarding the 4th and 6th.

Mr ADAM proposed, and Mr MILLS seconded:—

"That the following clause be adopted as a substitute for the fourth and sixth clauses of the original resolution:—

'That the union recommend to its friends throughout the country the necessity of urging the constituencies at every election to take the most effectual means for securing the return to the house of Commons of representatives pledged to the plan of complete suffrage.'

The amendment was lost by 47 against 11.

Mr ADAM and other gentlemen then entered their protest, which was recorded on the minutes.

Mr O'BRIEN moved the following amendment, for the purpose of placing it on record:—

"That this conference recommend the propriety of bringing forward candidates in favour of complete suffrage at all future elections for members of parliament, and not to support, directly or indirectly, any candidate who will not either pledge himself to support the principle of complete suffrage, or whose supporters will not give their second votes in favour of the candidate of our principles."

Mr SMYTH seconded the amendment, which was lost by a large majority.

At this stage of the proceedings Dr RITCHIE read the following address to the people.

The National Complete Suffrage Union to their Countrymen.

"Friends and fellow-citizens.—Our country's crisis has arrived; her sufferings have gone up into his ear, who hath pledged his truth that the rod of the oppressor shall be broken in pieces. New interests are cast into the crucible; be it yours to watch the process, and conduct it to the desired result. They who take the sword shall perish by the sword: let your force be argument; your lever public opinion; and your triumph must be joyous.

"Believe that vice is slavery; virtue true liberty and nobility; and that to be free, you must be self-emancipators.

"The character of your time is energy and celerity; exemplify your correspondence with it; work in this good work, as those who hear their country's call, that every man do his duty, and under the conscientious persuasion that every man has something to do, and can do it.

"The fearful alternative is convulsion or regeneration; as you dread the former strive in season and out of season for the latter.

"Borrow an instructive lesson from you foes—the class who are, as they falsely think, interested in maintaining the ills under which our country grieves—the removal of which has originated this Union—have been always distinguished by their systematic organisation, union and energy. By these they have triumphed; let reformers, in this, imitate them; thus is the present crisis to be effectually met and improved. Have class legislators generated, and turned to their profit the dissensions of reformers? Let such alienations, and the very appearance of them, be in all time coming anxiously guarded against.

"Having assumed as our basis the principle of universal adult male suffrage, labour for its diffusion among all classes; keep simply by the principle. Believing that union is strength, abstain from every source of mutual recrimination; bury past animosities; consign to oblivion hitherto disre-

pencies of sentiment; abolish, as far as may be, every term and watchword that may have been the badge of party or section; and henceforth, in language simple as your aim, strive in harmony for the welfare of our common country. Draw your ammunition from the magazine of argument, take every suitable opportunity to discuss in a free and kindly spirit the things in which you may have differed from others, or among yourselves; studiously retain your temper as you would preserve yourself and persuade your opponent.

"Labour to obtain an accurate registration of electors in your district—those who are of your mind, especially, as to our great movement; endeavour to obtain a list of non-electors who agree with you, and peaceably so regulate their organization, that on proper occasions, and for all profiting influences, they may furnish to all an exponent of their political opinions.

"Make the conclusions of the Union the essential tests of the sentiments and measures of candidates for a seat in parliament.

"Endeavour, in your respective districts, to obtain lecturers that may expound and recommend the principles and measures of the Union. Hold public meetings; form associations of your own, which, though necessarily unconnected with the National Union, may promote the one great object; and by every laudable means imbue the people of every class with the tenets of the Union, and ripen the public mind for practical measures. Above all things avoid secret and unlawful proceedings.

"Cherish earnestly the happy fraternal feeling which has eminently characterised the first meeting of conference, and which furnishes, as we trust, the best augury of our future proceedings. Let everything be done peacefully; abstain from every appearance of the evil that might make your good be evil spoken of. Lay your account with reproach; be nothing terrified by it; live it down by your quiet and honest life, known and read of all men. Thus will you become better citizens and better men, and prove to the conviction of your bitterest enemies that as you justly demand of them your rights, you are worthy of them; that as you have energy to obtain them, your purpose is to lay them out to using for the common weal of the country of your birth and of your affections."

The Rev. T. SPENCER moved, and Mr PARRY seconded:—

"That the address now read be adopted, subject to the revision of the executive committee, as suggested by Dr Ritchie; and that it be published under their direction; and that the thanks of this conference be presented to Dr Ritchie for having prepared it."

The resolution having been carried by acclamation, the seventh resolution was moved, recommending all classes not to enlist, &c.

Mr MILLS wished to have the opinion of the secretary on the legality of the recommendation.

Mr MORGAN said, he did not think the resolution absolutely illegal, but it was impossible to say what construction a jury who were disposed to convict might put on it. If this resolution were illegal there was scarcely a clergyman in the land who had not exposed himself to penalties; for recommendations to young men not to enlist and expose themselves to demoralisation and danger might be heard from every pulpit. The distinction he made was between recommendations not to do what the law required should be done, and recommendations not to do acts which in themselves were voluntary. To enlist was a voluntary act. No law required that this or that particular individual should enlist. To recommend soldiers not to serve, or persons not to pay taxes, was quite another thing.

The resolution was then amended and carried, but subject to future emendation. We therefore omit it.

"8. To appoint as many voluntary missionaries and lecturers as may be deemed necessary, to visit different parts of the country, for the purpose of generally explaining the views of this union, for promoting its efficient organisation, for lecturing on its different objects, and for otherwise seeing that the intentions of the general body are carried into effect throughout the kingdom, according to the instructions they receive from the general council."

"9. To print, from time to time, such tracts and pamphlets as the association may consider necessary for promoting its objects, and when its organisation is complete, to print a national weekly newspaper, and to support only such daily and other newspapers and periodicals as may be favourable to our objects."

"10. To raise a national fund for the carrying out of the above objects—1st, by the issuing of half-yearly cards to members at 6d. each; 2ndly, of annual cards to annual subscribers, at 5s. and 10s. each; 3rdly, of cards to honorary members, who give a donation of 5*l.* each or upwards."

"11. To adopt every just, peaceable, and legal means for carrying the above resolutions into effect, and only such."

Afternoon Sitting.

Mr LOVETT read the following rules; the adoption of which was moved by Mr CUMMINGS, and seconded by Mr HEWETSON.

"That the following rules be adopted for the government of the NATIONAL UNION."

RULES.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT.

"That the affairs of this Union shall be conducted by a general council of an indefinite number, in the proportion of one to each town or district in which there may be not less than 100 members, two to 500 members, and four for 1,000 and upwards. Also by a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and such sub-committees as may be deemed necessary."

GENERAL COUNCIL—HOW CHOSEN.

"In the first week in March in each year, notice shall be sent to every town (in which there may be 100 members of this Union), and advertisements shall be inserted in the public papers, announcing that on the day of April, an especial meeting of the members of the Union will be held in Birmingham (or such other place as may hereafter be agreed on), for the purpose of electing members of the general council. The nomination for each member of the council must be made in writing, and signed by at least 100 members of the Union, which nomination must be sent to the secretary, a week at least previous to the day of election. On that day, as soon as the chairman has stated the objects of the meeting, the secretary shall read over the list of persons thus nominated, and if any objections are then made (personally or by letter), against the names of any persons in such list, on the grounds of informality or deception, such names shall be suspended till the subject be investigated; and the other names having been formally moved and seconded shall be put to the vote, and determined by a show of hands.

OTHER OFFICERS—HOW CHOSEN.

"The president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary, and such other officers as may be required, shall be elected by the general council, on the first day of its sittings in each year; the election shall be by ballot, and decided by a majority of votes. All members of this Union (whether elected to the general council or not), shall be eligible to fill any office according to their competency."

MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION—THEIR ELIGIBILITY.

"All approving of and acting in accordance with the declared objects, and conforming to the rules of this Union, are eligible to become members, on taking out their cards, and keeping up their payments, otherwise their names will be erased from the books."

THE PRESIDENT—HIS DUTIES.

"It shall be the duty of the president to attend the meetings of the general council and preside over their deliberations. He shall sign all official orders or documents passed by the council as well as all money orders vested by them or commissioned by their authority. He shall be empowered to order an especial meeting of the general council to be summoned on an extraordinary occasion, as well as to order a meeting of any other officers of the union, to be called whenever he may deem it necessary."

THE VICE-PRESIDENT—HIS DUTIES.

"During the time the president is present, the vice-president shall assist in the business of the general council, and when he is absent shall preside over their deliberations. He shall also perform such other duties appertaining to the office of president, as he may require of him under his written authority."

"THE TREASURER—HIS DUTIES.

"The treasurer shall cause all monies received by him to pass through the hands of the bankers, and shall keep a correct account from their books of all monies transmitted to them and the names of the persons from whom sent. He shall pay, by cheques on the banker, all bills of the Union under an order of the general council, and signed by himself, the president, or vice-president, but not otherwise. His accounts of receipts and expenditure shall be open for the inspection of the general council whenever they meet; and every year he shall prepare a balance sheet of receipts and expenditure, to be laid before the general council the first day of its sittings.

"THE SECRETARY—HIS DUTIES.

"The secretary shall attend all meetings of the general council, as well as all meetings of the officers of this Union, and keep correct minutes of their proceedings, which minutes he shall read over at the next meeting. He shall (with such assistants as may be required) conduct all the correspondence of the Union, and confer with its officers respecting all business of importance. He shall see that new cards (of a different colour) are issued to members every six months. All monies which pass into his hands he shall hand over to the treasurer, and keep a correct account of the same. All sums for petty cash expenses he must receive from orders on the treasurer, signed by the president.

"MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL—THEIR DUTIES.

"The members of the general council shall meet for the transaction of business on the day following their election, or as shortly after it as possible, and hold their sittings from day to day (Sunday excepted) for any period not exceeding eight days, nor shall any extraordinary meeting, convened by the president, be prolonged beyond that time. Their meetings shall be open to gentlemen of the press, or such members of this Union as the room will accommodate. On the first day of meeting, and, if possible, before the election of officers, they shall investigate and decide respecting all objections that may have been made on the day of election against persons nominated as members of the general council. They shall then proceed with the general business, and determine in what manner they can best promote and carry out the objects of this Union. Their expenses to and from their place of meeting must be defrayed by the members of their respective localities. They shall be recommended to make arrangements for the disposal of cards and forward the objects of this Union in their respective localities, according to such plans as may hereafter be agreed to.

"SUB-COMMITTEES—THEIR DUTIES.

"The president, vice-president, treasurer, and secretary, for the time being, together with such members of the general council as choose to attend, shall be considered a perpetual sub-committee (when the general council is not sitting). They shall meet as often as may be required for the purpose of performing such business as may be necessary, their powers having been previously defined by the general council.

"THE MISSIONARIES AND LECTURERS—THEIR DUTIES.

"It shall be their duty to visit such places and perform such duties as the general council may require, according to a plan of their route and the written instructions they may receive.

"ALTERATION OF RULES.

"Any member of the general council desirous of proposing any alteration or amendment in the rules and regulations of this Union, shall give two days notice of the same prior to the annual meeting, when the alteration shall be discussed and determined on."

Mr LOVETT proposed, and the Rev. T. H. MORGAN seconded,

"That Joseph Sturge, Esq., be appointed the provisional president; James Charles Perry, the provisional vice-president; William Morgan, the provisional secretary; A. Albright, the provisional treasurer; and the following gentlemen the provisional general council, for the purpose of organising the National Complete Suffrage Union according to the constitution and rules now agreed to, for considering the best time for convening a conference to consider the details of our principles, and for carrying out the different resolutions agreed to by this conference:

Thomas Steele.

J. H. Webb.

Charles Crawford.

Rev. Thomas Spencer, of Bath.

R. Gardner, of Manchester.

Christopher Dickenson, of Birmingham.

Henry Vincent, of Bath.

T. B. Potter, of Manchester.

Francis Dickenson, of Birmingham.

F. J. Thompson.

William Lovett, of London.

James Mills.

John Hollingsworth, of Birmingham.

C. H. Neeson, of London.

Rev. J. Allsop, of Birmingham.

Jahn Mitchell, of Aberdeen.

Edward Bryan, of Birmingham.

Rev. Henry Solly, of Yeovil.

George Goodrick, of Birmingham.

Robert Hardy, of Worcester.

John Collins, of Birmingham.

John Childs, of Bungay.

Rev. T. Swan, of Birmingham.

William Hollis, of Cheltenham.

Frederick Warren, of Manchester.

Rev. Edward Miall, of London.

D. T. Rowlinson, of Birmingham.

Rev. Noah Jones, of Derby.

Alfred Lawden, of Birmingham.

Rev. Dr Ritchie, of Edinburgh.

Robert Martin, of Leeds.

Charles Cumming, of Leeds.

J. H. Parry, of London.

James Adam, of Aberdeen.

John Bright, of Rochdale.

John Dunlop, of Edinburgh.

J. G. Stewart, of Markinch.

Charles Westerton, of London.

Owen J. Roland, of Dundee.

Lawrence Heyworth, of Liverpool.

Rev. J. P. Mursell, of Leicester.

Samuel Fox, of Nottingham.

J. S. Whittam, of Coventry.

Rev. J. Jenkinson of Kettering."

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously.

Mr JAMES CLARK moved, and Mr MITCHELL seconded,

"That the following gentlemen be requested to make arrangements for the sale of cards of membership in their respective localities, to cause the names and addresses of members to be sent to the secretary (distinguishing those who are electors), and to cause the monies for such cards to be sent to the treasurer."

[The list here referred to was intended to include the names of all the delegates who were willing to undertake the duty.]

The resolution was then put and agreed to.

Mr ADAMS moved, and Mr WRIGHT seconded,

"That the members of this conference be respectfully requested to urge all persons in their different localities to take out cards of the National Complete Suffrage association."

Agreed to.

Mr GARDNER moved, and Mr LEES seconded,

"That this conference is of opinion that all political associations, and all societies for improving and benefiting the people, ought to urge on their members the necessity of individually enrolling themselves members of the National Complete Suffrage Union, as well as supporting the societies to which they belong. And believe that every means should be taken to form complete suffrage associations in those localities, where efficient societies are not already formed."

Carried unanimously.

Mr PARRY moved and the Rev. J. JENKINSON seconded,

"That the especial thanks of this conference be given to the following 41 members of parliament, who honestly recorded their votes in favour of William Sharman Crawfords motion on the 28th August, 1841, which was that the following clause be added to the address to the Queen.

"That we further respectfully represent to your Majesty, that, in our opinion, the distress which your Majesty deplores is mainly attributable to the circumstances of your whole people not being fully and fairly represented in this House, and that we feel it will be our duty to consider the means of so extending and regulating the suffrage, and of adopting such improvement in the system of voting as will confer on the working classes just weight in the representative body, which is necessary to secure a due consideration of their interests, and which their present patient endurance of suffering gives them the strongest title to claim."

Tellers—Mr S. Crawford and Mr T. Duncombe.

Aglionby, Henry A.

Bell, John, (Thirsk)

Blake, Mark (Mayo co.)

Blake, M. J. (Galway tn.)

Blake, Sir V. (Galway)

Blewitt, Reginald J.

Bowring, Dr

Bridgeman, Hewitt

Brotherton, Joseph

Butler, Hon. Colonel

Cobden, Richard

Collins, William

Elphinstone, Howard

Carried by acclamation.

Ewart, William

Fleetwood, Sir P. H.

Gibson, Thos. Milner

Granger, Thos. Colpitts

Hay, Sir Andrew Leith

Hill, Lord Marcus

Hindley, Charles

Johnson, Henry (Oldham)

Johnson, A. (Kilmarnock)

Layard, Captain

Marsland, Henry

Murphy, Francis Stack

Napier, Sir Charles

O'Brien, C. (Clare)

O'Brien, J. (Limerick city)

Pechell, Captain

Powell, C. (Limerick co.)

Rawden, Colonel

Rennie, George

Rundle, John

Seale, Sir John Henry

Wallace, Robert

Wason, Rigby

Williams, W. (Coventry)

Wilson, Matthew

Yorke, H. R. (York)

Mr WARREN thought that considering the state of the public press generally those gentlemen who had been bold enough to come forward and advocate the principles adopted by the conference, were deserving of the gratitude of every man who felt aright with reference to the interests of his country. On that ground he most cordially moved the following resolution:—

"That this conference cannot separate without recording their heartfelt gratitude to Mr Miall editor of the *Nonconformist* for his powerful advocacy of our principles, and tendering their thanks to that portion of the public press which has honestly reported the proceedings and advocated the cause of complete suffrage."

Mr EARL in seconding the motion, observed that the *Nonconformist* was becoming one of the most popular journals of the day. He thought they were bound to countenance and sanction the efforts made by the editor of that paper.

The Rev. T. SPENCER, and Mr VINCENT, Mr NEESOM, Mr GARDNER, and Mr POTTER bore testimony to the effects produced by the articles on complete suffrage contained in the *Nonconformist*.

Mr MITCHELL and Mr ADAM accorded the meed of praise to the *Nonconformist* and to several Scotch papers, advocating the same sentiments.

The resolution was then put and carried by acclamation.

Mr BRIGHT moved, and Mr LOVETT seconded:—

"That whilst this conference deem that full and frequent discussion is necessary to the establishment of the principles of the National Complete Suffrage Union, and will tend greatly to their advancement and success, they feel bound to declare that in their deliberate judgment it will be highly inexpedient and improper to interfere with public or other meetings, called to consider subjects unconnected with the question of parliamentary reform by the introduction of the principles and objects of the union in opposition to the arrangements under which such meetings may have been convened."

The resolution having been carried, the Rev. H. SOLLY moved, and Mr O. J. ROWLAND seconded.

"That whereas the great ends of human existence have for a long series of years been fearfully frustrated among millions of our fellow-countrymen in consequence of the effects of selfish legislation, this conference cannot separate without emphatically declaring their deliberate conviction that both the principles of justice and the spirit of Christianity, imperatively call upon all ministers of religion and their congregations to join in a movement which is undertaken in the earnest hope and expectation of making the freedom and justice which they seek minister to the highest and most enduring interests of all their fellow-men."

Mr MORGAN announced that the business prepared by the executive committee having been despatched it was competent to any gentleman to bring forward any resolution he might have prepared, upon which,

Mr DEWHURST rose and moved, and Mr BROOK seconded.

"That we the delegates, assembled in conference at Birmingham, having after due and mature consideration recognised and adopted the principles of annual parliaments, universal suffrage, vote by ballot, equal representation, no property qualification for members of parliament, and payment of representatives, cannot under such circumstances consistently separate without giving a cordial and hearty vote of thanks to the working classes for the indomitable courage, hearty perseverance, and Christian forbearance manifested by them as a body in times of trying want and surpassing emergency brought about by the misrule of class legislation and the monopoly of interested speculators, and we further pledge ourselves to co-operate in every constitutional agitation for the purpose of creating, organising, and directing such union of all classes as may tend to the attainment of the principles which we have recognised."

Several delegates, among whom was Mr O'BRIEN, urged the withdrawal or modification of the resolution, but the mover and seconder declared that they would not accede to it; the conference might either reject or adopt it.

Mr PARRY then moved, and the Rev. H. SOLLY seconded, the following amendment:—

"That this conference cannot separate without recording a cordial and hearty vote of thanks to all those of the working classes and others who hitherto, amid privation, persecution, suffering, or obloquy, have agitated peacefully and by moral means for those principles which have been affirmed in this conference."

For the amendment, 41; against it, 5; majority, 36.

Mr STURGE having vacated the chair, it was taken by the Rev. T. SPENCER.

Mr ADAM then moved a vote of thanks to Mr Sturge for the able and conciliatory manner in which he had presided over the conference.

Several gentlemen rose to second the resolution, which was carried amidst protracted and enthusiastic cheering.

Mr STURGE briefly acknowledged the compliment; after which a resolution thanking the parties who had so kindly accommodated the delegates during their stay in Birmingham was carried by acclamation, and the conference closed.

MISCELLANEOUS INTELLIGENCE.

DREADFUL MURDER.—A murder has come to light at the village of Roehampton, Surrey, which rivals the Greenacre murder in circumstances of atrocity. The mode of discovery was singular. A policeman who had been despatched after a man of the name of Good, a coachman in the employ of Mr Shiele, a gentleman residing near the village, for having stolen a pair of trowsers, came to the stables, Good's usual place of abode, and was admitted by the coachman himself. The policeman insisted on searching the chaise in which they had been concealed, and extended his search to the coach house and one of the stables. On proceeding to the other stable, Good refused to let him enter, but was at length compelled by the appearance of Mr Oughton, Mr Shiele's bailiff. When they came to some corn bins the coachman exhibited great uneasiness, and the policeman removed some hay and discovered beneath what appeared to him to be a dead goose, but before he could examine it, Good rushed from the stable and locked the door on the outside. Unable to burst the door open, they proceeded to examine what had been found in the hay, which proved to be the trunk of a woman's body, shorn of its head and limbs, with the internal parts removed. On bursting open the door the alarm was given, but Good had escaped. Some calcined bones were afterwards found in the harness

miners at work at the time, most of whom are severely burnt, and some, it is feared, are in a dangerous state.

SHIPWRECKS.—The Viscount Melbourne, East Indiaman, was totally lost during the month of February last, on her passage from Madras to Macao. During a calm when off the Luconia shoal in the China sea, the ship struck on the rocks and it was found impossible to get her off. The crew and passengers left the vessel in five boats and steered towards the coast of Borneo. During their progress the boats parted company, and the jolly boat which was a little astern was plundered by the crew of a Malay prahu, of everything that it contained. The launch and second cutter reached Singapore in safety with all well on board, having been thirteen days exposed in an open boat. The first cutter with thirteen persons on board, among whom was Lieutenant Campbell, has not yet been heard of.—On Wednesday last accounts were received at Lloyd's of the destruction by fire of the brig *Seaforth*, of Sunderland, Captain Swansen, while on her passage from that port to Inverness, on the night of the 4th inst. The vessel left Sunderland and towards evening the weather had become so boisterous that the captain determined to run her into Shields harbour for shelter, and in so doing a heavy sea drove the vessel on shore, and but for the arrival of the Teignmouth life-boat, the whole crew would have been washed overboard and drowned. Next afternoon a body of fire suddenly burst forth from the main hatchway to the surprise and astonishment of all assembled. Assistance was immediately procured, and every effort made to smother the flames, but to no purpose. The fire raged until every timber was consumed, during which period thousands of persons thronged the beach. Her loss is estimated at 2,600*l.*, and she is supposed to be insured. The fire was caused by the lime in the hold of the vessel being very wet.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

The ordination of the Rev. Thomas Clark, B.A., late of Highbury college, over the independent church in Bungay, Suffolk, took place on Wednesday, April the 6th. In the morning, after reading and prayer by the Rev. John Dennant, of Halesworth, the introductory discourse was delivered by the Rev. Richard Alliott, LL.D. of Nottingham. The Rev. John Flower, of Beccles, asked the usual questions. The Rev. Andrew Ritchie, of Wrentham, offered up the ordination prayer. The charge was delivered by the Rev. Ebenezer Henderson, D.D., of Highbury college; and the Rev. John Alexander, of Norwich, concluded with prayer. In the evening, after reading and prayer by the Rev. G. L. Smith, of Halesworth, the sermon to the people was preached by the Rev. William Garthwaite, of Wattisfield. Hymns were read by the Revs. Hopkins, of Southwold; G. Wilkins, of Rendham; J. Rogers, of Lowestoft; and E. H. Delf, of Coward college. Several other ministers were present. After the morning service, about 120 of the friends dined together at the Tuns Inn.

On Tuesday, the 29th of March, a new chapel, at Barley, Hertfordshire, was opened for public worship. Three sermons were preached on the occasion; in the morning, by the Rev. Thos. Jenkyn, D.D. of Coward college; in the afternoon, by the Rev. Charles Gilbert, of Islington; and in the evening, by the Rev. John Young, M.A., of Albion chapel, London. Although upwards of £350 had been previously raised by the people, the collections at the opening amounted to £105 7s. 10*d.* The Rev. Archibald Macarthur, late of Van Dieman's Land, has undertaken the pastoral charge of the people.

MARRIAGES.

April 4, by license, at the Independent chapel, Belper, by the Rev. J. R. Gawthorne, the Rev. JOHN MEESON OBERY, M.A., of Halifax, to MARTHA, second daughter of John HARRISON, Esq., of the Lawn, Belper.

April 6, at Gunnersbury park, by the Rev. Dr Herschell, Baron CHARLES DE ROTHSCHILD, eldest son of Baron de Rothschild, of Naples, to LOUISA, youngest daughter of the late N. M. DE ROTHSCHILD.

DEATHS.

April 4, at Preston house, near Shrewsbury, in his 64th year, Sir FRANCIS BRIAN HILL, brother to Lord Hill.

April 4, very suddenly, in his 73rd year, the Rev. WILLIAM JERVIS, of Gosford street, Coventry, for many years a minister of the general baptist denomination.

April 5, aged 52, GEORGE PAICE, Esq., for many years deacon of the Independent church, Basingstoke.

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

LONDON GAZETTE.

Friday, April 8.

The following buildings are certified as places duly registered for solemnising marriages, pursuant to the act of 6 and 7 Wm IV., cap. 85:—

Gullifer chapel, Woodbury, Devonshire. J. Bowring, deputy superintendent registrar.

The congregational chapel, Farringdon, Berkshire. J. Haines, superintendent registrar.

INSOLVENTS.

BECK, LANCELOT, Bristol, broker, April 6.

BROWN, MARTHA, and BROMLEY, SAMUEL, Denton, Lancashire, hat manufacturers, April 8.

COOK, CHARLES, George yard, Longacre, livery stable keeper, April 8.

BANKRUPTS.

BOLTON, DAVID, Kingston-upon-Hull, corn merchant, to surrender April 19, May 20: solicitors, Messrs Hicks and Marris, 5, Gray's inn square, London, and Messrs Galloway and Co., Hull.

BONNY, JAMES, Liverpool, tailor, April 18, May 20: solicitors, Mr D. Evans, and Messrs Kenyon and Stone, Liverpool, and Mr Oliver, 36, Old Jewry, London.

CAREY, FRANCIS, Nottingham, hatter, April 15, May 20: solicitors, Messrs Watson and Broughton, Falcon square.

CARRINGTON, GEORGE, Age livery stables, Albion street, Hyde park, horse dealer, April 19, May 20: solicitor, Mr Foster, 61, Jermyn street, St James's.

CHAPMAN, FREDERICK, late of Fenchurch street, City, but now of Mansell street, wine merchant, April 18, May 20: solicitor, Mr Lamb, 14, Bucklersbury.

CLARKE, JAMES and ROBERT P., Leeds, music sellers, April 22, May 20: solicitors, Mr J. Theobald, Staple inn, London, and Messrs Payne and Co., Leeds.

COLE, JAMES, late of Kettering, Northamptonshire, woolstapler, May 2, 20: solicitors, Mr Maule, Huntingdon, and Messrs Egan and Co., 23, Essex street Strand, London.

CROSSFIELD, ABRAHAM, 91, Whitechapel road, Middlesex, and of Highland's Farm, Kent, scrivener, April 19, May 20: solicitors, Messrs Hindmarsh and Son, Crescent, Jewin street, Cripplegate.

FILMER, WILLIAM, and GOODING, WILLIAM SMITH, late of the Old Swan brewery, Osborne street, Whitechapel, brewers, April 19, May 20: solicitors, Messrs Young and Son, 29, Mark lane.

GOUGH, FREDERICK WILLIAM, Pencombe, Herefordshire, April 26, May 20: solicitors, Mr Smith, 5, Southampton buildings, London, and Mr Hammond, Leominster.

HOPKINS, WILLIAM HANBURY, Worcester, currier and leather cutter, April 19, May 20: solicitors, Messrs Blower and Vizard, 61, Lincoln's inn fields, London, and Mr H. Foley, Worcester.

JOHNSON, JOHN, Leeds, tow spinner, April 22, May 20: solicitors, Messrs Battye and Co., Chancery lane, London, and Mr J. Shackleton, Leeds.

OWEN, JOHN, Woolwich, Kent, cow keeper, April 15, May 20: solicitors, Messrs Willoughby and Jacquet, Clifford's inn.

PALLISER, RICHARD, 23, Moorgate street, City, saddler and harness maker, April 23, May 20: solicitors, Messrs Wire and Child, St Swithin's lane.

RICKET, HENRY, Henry street, Pentonville, dealer in wine, April 19, May 20: solicitor, Mr Spyer, Broad street buildings.

SNEADE, SAMUEL CARTWRIGHT, Wavertree, Lancashire, timber merchant, April 20, May 20: solicitors, Mr J. Owens, Newtown, Montgomeryshire, Mr Mason, Liverpool, and Messrs Willis and Co., Tokenhouse yard, London.

WEBB, WILLIAM ROBERTSON, 3, Knightsbridge terrace, Knightsbridge, wine merchant, April 23, May 20: solicitors, Messrs Wilde and Co., College hill.

SCOTCH SEQUESTRATIONS.

CLARK, LACHLAN, and MURESS, JOSHUA, Greenock, ship builders, April 14, May 5.

CROPPER, WILLIAM, Edinburgh, painter, April 12, May 3.

DAVIDSON, ROBERT, Dumbarton, grocer, April 16, May 4.

GUTHRIE, THOMAS, lately of Burnside of Balconnel, Forfarshire, April 11, May 2.

OLIPHANT, ROBERT, Kirkaldy, rope and sail maker, April 14, May 5.

WHAMOND, ALEXANDER, Dundee, merchant, April 14, May 5.

DIVIDENDS.

April 29, Parker and Co., late of Bircham lane, City, merchants—May 2, Weigall, Conduit street, Regent street, tailor—April 29, Heakin, Thorley, Hertfordshire, horse dealer—April 29, Hubble, Dartford, Kent, miller—April 30, Robottom, Black Bull inn, Holborn hill, tavern keeper—April 30, Clark, 135, Fleet street, brush manufacturer—April 30, Jerningham, now or late of 6, Henrietta street, Covent garden, banker—April 30, C. and P. Knight, Ivy lane, Newgate market, salesmen—April 30, Hudson, 43, Lime street, City, drayster—April 29, A. and C. Duncan, Tokenhouse yard, City, merchants—April 29, Bellemois, Pomroy street, Old Kent road, manufacturing chemist—April 29, Maddox and Blenkarn, Watling street, City, warehousemen—April 29, Humfrey, jun., Great Stanmore, Middlesex, bricklayer—May 2, Hunt, Manchester, flour dealer—May 3, Wood, Manchester, lace dealer—April 29, Clapham, Friars Goose, Gateshead, Durham, soda manufacturer—April 30, Shackles, Kingston-upon-Hull, linen draper—May 3, Richan and Co., Sunderland, tanners—May 4, I. and U. Taylor, Meltham, Yorkshire, clothiers—May 12, Fowkes, Leicester, hosier—May 3, Westwood, Birmingham, gun maker—June 1, Rogers, Newport, Monmouthshire, grocer—April 30, J. and A. Y. Barrett, Kingston-upon-Hull, engine manufacturers—May 3, Wilson, Salford, Lancashire, machine maker—April 30, Dainty, Manchester, banker—April 30, Southall, jun., Birmingham, merchant—May 6, Eastwood, Huddersfield, Yorkshire, woolstapler—May 2, Joshua Radford, Manchester, iron founder—May 3, Joseph Radford, Manchester, iron founder—May 4, Dickson and Glover, Liverpool, seed merchants—May 2, E. C. J., and J. Radford, Manchester, iron founders.

CERTIFICATES—APRIL 29.

Debenham, 54, Bayham street, Camden Town, builder—Trapps, Abridge, Essex, victualler—Jeffries, Newport, Monmouthshire, ironmonger—Pilcher, Crabble, Kent, miller—Perkins, St Wollos, Monmouthshire, ship builder—Baber, Lindfield, Sussex, maltster—Bacon and Wayman, Barbican, London, wire workers—Lucas, late of Fenchurch street, London, but now of Bridge street, Southwark, money scrivener—Ponten, late of 42, Ludgate hill, chemist—Warne, Lisle street, Westminster, carpenter—Winter, Bristol, builder.

PARTNERSHIPS DISSOLVED.

G. and R. J. Cochrane, Merthyr Tidvil, Glamorganshire, drapers—Carrick and Potts, Liverpool, printers—Mabon and Kent, Southampton, ironmongers—Ferris and Paddon, Truro, Cornwall, merchants—Brunskill, 20, Pembroke place, and Dermott, 17, Pembroke place, Pimlico—J. and S. Farrant, Tiverton, Devonshire, drapers—Johnson and Jones, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, leather dealers—Pickard and Johnson, Bedworth, Warwickshire, ribbon manufacturers—Innes and Mackenzie, 15, Bayswater terrace, Bayswater, surgeons—M. and J. Devereux, New Windsor, Berkshire, hat manufacturers—Brierley and Co., Leicester, lambs' wool yarn spinners (so far as regards Poppleton)—Pawsey and Co., Bury St Edmund's, Suffolk, drapers—Smith and Fenn, 69, Aldersgate street, City, whalebone cutters—Milnes, of Basford, and Hopkins, of Lenton, Nottinghamshire, bleachers—Thompson and Etchells, Ashton-under-Lyne, linen drapers—Kitching and Reckitt, Kingston-upon-Hull, brush makers—T. and W. Hill, Wapping wall, Middlesex, sail makers—Rawnsley and Co., Yeading, Yorkshire, cloth manufacturers—Sibbald and Robson, Liverpool, wine and provision merchants—W. and H. Turner, Kendal, Westmoreland, tea dealers—Thompson and Naylor, Collyhurst, Lancashire, finishers—Bell and Carter, Bristol, glass stainlers—Taylor and Co., Nottingham, general agents—S. L. and H. Pratt, 47, 123, and 129, New Bond street, and 3, Lower Grosvenor street, upholsterers—Hainstock and Thackray, Tabernacle square, Shoreditch, brewers—Button and Co., Belvidere road, Lambeth, patent white lead manufacturers.

Tuesday, April 12.

BANKRUPTCY ENLARGED.

DAKEYNE, JOSEPH, late of Nottingham, but now of Edinburgh, lace dealer, April 29.

BANKRUPTCIES ANNULLED.

LEWIS, JOHN, Hockley colliery, Staffordshire, coal master.

BANKRUPTS.

BUCKTON, JOHN, Darlington, Durham, grocer, April 28, May 24: solicitors, Messrs Mewburn and Hutchinson, Darlington, and Mr B. Mewburn, 9, Great Winchester street, London.

CHALONER, JAMES, Chester, currier, April 27, May 24: solicitors, Messrs Philpot and Son, 3, Southampton street, Bloomsbury, London, and Mr Finchett Maddock, Chester.

COOK, DAVID, Liverpool, rope maker, April 25, May 24: solicitors, Mr Richard Baynes Armstrong, 8, Staple inn, London, and Messrs Knapper and Woolright, Liverpool.

DAWSON, JOHN, Tudeley, and DAWSON, WILLIAM, Tonbridge, Kent, builders—April 25, May 24: solicitors, Messrs Jenings and Co., and Mr Ralph Stevenson, jun., Hanley, Staffordshire.

DICKINSON, EDMUND ALLGOOD, late of 12, but now of 57, Pall mall, money scrivener, April 18, May 24: solicitors, Messrs Pocock and Co., Bartholomew close.

DRANSFIELD, RICHARD, and DRANSFIELD, GEORGE, Leeds, Lancashire, cotton spinners, April 25, May 24: solicitors, Messrs Makinson and Sanders, 3, Elm court, Middle Temple, London, and Messrs Atkinson and Saunders, Manchester.

EDLIN, HENRY, Gloucester hotel, Brighton, Sussex, hotel and tavern keeper, April 25, May 24: solicitors, Messrs King and Attwaters, 27, Queen street, Cheapside, London.

HALLIDAY, WILLIAM, Liverpool, innkeeper, April 25 and May 24: solicitors, Mr James Wason, Liverpool, and Messrs Milne and Co., Temple, London.

MINTY, EDWARD, Warminster, Wiltshire, maltster, April 18, May 24: solicitors, Mr Chapman, Warminster, and Messrs Holme and Co., 10, New inn, London.

NUTH, RICHARD, Frome Selwood, Somersetshire, maltster, April 18, May 24: solicitors, Mr William Hamwood Frampton, 2, South square, Gray's inn, London, and Mr Henry Miller, Frome Selwood.

NUTTER, JAMES, and ELLISTON, WILLIAM, Cambridge, brewers, April 26, May 24: solicitors, Mr Stephen Adecock, Cambridge, and Mr William Henry Ashurst, 137, Cheapside, London.

PAYNE, WILLIAM, Hand court, Holborn, victualler, April 19, May 24: solicitor, Mr Samuel Abrahams, 4, Lincoln's inn fields.

PICKERING, JOHN, Loughborough, Leicestershire, wine and spirit merchant, April 22, May 24: solicitors, Messrs Emmett and Allen, 14, Bloomsbury square, London, and Mr Alfred Hucknall, Loughborough, Leicestershire.

SMITH, THOMAS and TAYLOR, THOMAS, Worcester, retailers of boots and shoes, April 27, May 24: solicitors, Messrs Blower and Vizard, 61, Lincoln's inn fields, London, and Mr Henry Foley, Worcester.

STRINGER, ROBERT, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, wine and spirit merchant, April 23, May 24: solicitors, Mr Christopher Sayers, Great Yarmouth, and Mr Andrew Storey, 5, Field court, Gray's inn, London.

TILL, HENRY, late of Chatham, Kent, but now of Moulsham, Essex, draper, April 20, May 24: solicitor, Mr W. H. Ashurst, 137, Cheapside.

SCOTCH SEQUESTRATIONS.

BROWN, ALEXANDER, Glasgow, ironmonger, April 15, May 6.

CAMPBELL, JAMES, Lettico, Rossshire, corn dealer, April 16, May 14.

M'PHERDAN, Greenock, cooper, April 16, May 7.

SHARP, MARGARET, or DUNCAN, Greenock, ship builder, April 19, May 14.

DIVIDENDS.

May 6, Makins, Blandford street, Manchester square, grocer, oilman, and wine merchant—May 4, Saunders, jun., 132, Upper Thames street, City, fish factor and merchant—May 5, Whitmore and Co., Lombard street, bankers—May 5, Riley, Wellesbourne Hastings, Warwickshire, corn dealer and farmer—May 13, King, Bristol, dealer in ships' stores—May 6, Power, sen., Atherstone, Warwickshire, hat manufacturer—May 3, Thompson, Monk Wearmouth Shore, Durham, ship builder and merchant—May 4, Gray, sen., Manchester, paper manufacturer—May 16, Murgatroyd, Bradford, Yorkshire, worsted spinner—May 2, Rawlings, Gloucester, innkeeper—May 16, Bonner, Thame, Oxfordshire, furniture broker and brick maker—May 6, J. and W. Lloyd, Atherstone, Warwickshire, builders and cabinet makers—May 4, Johnson, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, builders—May 4, Green, Kilnhurst pottery, near Rotherham, Yorkshire, earthenware manufacturer.

CERTIFICATES—MAY 3.

Linnemann, Liverpool, merchant—Gouger, Great Winchester street, City, merchant—Edgell, New inn, near Rownham ferry, Somersetshire, innkeeper—Bonner-Thame, Oxfordshire, furniture broker and brick maker—Jones, City road, draper.

PARTNERSHIPS DISSOLVED.

Galloway and Co., London, general merchants (so far as regards J. Tibaldi and E. Galloway)—Tibaldi and Galloway, Alexandria, Egypt, general merchants—Rowan and Inglis, Hereford, hatters—J. and G. Mathew, 14, Ivy lane, Newgate street, butchers—Mason and Meyers, Hill street, Southwark, lead refiners—Tucker and Boultan, Abercchan, near Pontypool, Monmouthshire, surgeons—Leslie and Griffin, Falmouth, merchants—Massey and Lambert, 15, Watling street, City, warehousemen—J. and J. Weale, late of Guilford and Godalming, Surrey, linen drapers—Cooke and Murrell, 3, Union street, Bishopsgate, silk manufacturers—W. and T. Turnbull, Howdans Pans, Northumberland, timber merchants—Hedges and Scott, 163, Fleet street, wine merchants—Leaf and Croft, Sambrook court, Basinghall street, merchants—W. F. P. S. A., and C. Lee, Lewes, Sussex, newspaper proprietors and printers—E. and M. Day, Butley Carr, Yorkshire, woolstaplers—Handley and Brookes, 21, Red Lion square, auctioneers—Fletcher and Jenkinson, Liverpool colour manufacturers—E. and W. F. Cobb, Margate, bankers—Tuke and Allanson, York, land agents—Buckland and Evans, jun., 18, Cullum street, City, wine merchants—Crawshaw and Co., York, general contractors (so far as regards J. Rush)—Burtt and Son, Grand Surrey Canal, Camberwell, limeburners—Chatterton and Clarke, Bolton le Moors, Lancashire, rag, bone, and paper dealers—Coleman and Hunt, Broad Oak, Gloucestershire, timber and charcoal burners and dealers—Thomson and Patrick, South Shields, Durham, linen and woollen drapers—Blythe and Reader, Kingston-upon-Hull, mustard manufacturers—Sawdon and Aspell, Salford, Lancashire, common brewers—Newbold and Co., Bury, Lancashire, ironfounders, machine makers, joiners, and house builders (so far as regards T. Brown)—Mason and Toy, Castle street, Holborn, lamp and gas fitters—Metcalfe and Downing, Curtain road, Middlesex, japanners—Dixon and Co., Liverpool, spirit merchants, wine merchants, and rectifiers (so far as regards W. Dixon) Harveys and Hudsons, Norwich, bankers (so far as regards C. Savill)—Mackarness and Higgin, Crosby square, Bishopsgate street, merchants.

BRITISH FUNDS.

There has been a moderate amount of business transacted in the money market since our last, and prices continue firm.

	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Mon.	Tues.
3 per cent. Consols	90 $\frac{1}{2}$					
Ditto for Account	90 $\frac{1}{2}$	91 $\frac{1}{2}$	90 $\frac{1}{2}$	91 $\frac{1}{2}$	91 $\frac{1}{2}$	91 $\frac{1}{2}$
3 per cents. Reduced	89 $\frac{1}{2}$	90	90	90	90	90
3 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cents. Reduced	99	99 $\frac{1}{2}$				
New 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.	100	100 $\frac{1}{2}$				
Long Annuities	12 $\frac{1}{2}$					
Bank Stock	166 $\frac{1}{2}$	167 $\frac{1}{2}$	167 $\frac{1}{2}$	166 $\frac{1}{2}$	166 $\frac{1}{2}$	166 $\frac{1}{2}$
India Stock	242	241	—	—	—	—
Exchequer Bills	37 pm	37 pm	38 pm	38 pm	37 pm	38 pm
India Bonds, 3 percent.	12 pm	14 pm	16 pm	16 pm	16 pm	16 pm

FOREIGN FUNDS.

Austrian	112 $\frac{1}{2}$	Mexican	41 $\frac{1}{2}$
Belgian	104	Peruvian	17 $\frac{1}{2}$
Brazilian	67 $\frac{1}{2}$	Portuguese 5 per cents	—
Buenos Ayres	22 $\frac{1}{2}$	Ditto 3 per cents	21 $\frac{1}{2}$
Columbian	27	Russian	112 $\frac{1}{2}$
Danish	—	Spanish Active	25 $\frac{1}{2}$
Dutch 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cents	52 $\frac{1}{2}$	Ditto Passive	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Ditto 5 per cents	100	Ditto Deferred	12 $\frac{1}{2}$

SHARES.

Railways—		London and Brighton	37
Birmingham and Derby	55	London and Croydon Trunk	13
Birmingham and Gloucester	57	London and Greenwich	6 $\frac{1}{2}$
Blackwall	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	Ditto New	18
Bristol and Exeter	39	Manchester and Birmingham	28 $\frac{1}{2}$
Cheltenham and Gt. Western	16 $\frac{1}{2}$	Manchester and Leeds	80 $\frac{1}{2}$
Eastern Counties	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	Midland Counties	80
Edinburgh and Glasgow	—	Ditto Quarter Shares	26
Great North of England	—	North Midland	70 $\frac{1}{2}$
Great Western	92	Ditto New	34
Ditto New	64	South Eastern and Dover	26 $\frac{1}{2}$
Ditto Fifths	11	South Western	61
London and Birmingham	176 $\frac{1}{2}$	Ditto New	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
Ditto Quarter Shares	31		

MARKETS.

GRAIN, MARK LANE, April 11.

Although we had but a short supply of English wheat to-day the trade was heavy, and but barely supported prices. In foreign there was less doing, either in free or bonded, and rather lower prices would have been accepted, to have made progress in sales.

Barley, being rather scarce, obtained 1s. advance, and good qualities sold readily at the improvement.

Beans and grey peas of all sorts are 1s. higher, but there is no improvement in white peas.

Wheat, Red New 51 to 58	Malt, Ordinary.. 50 to 53	Beans, Old..... 30 to 35
Fine..... 58 .. 69	Pale..... 56 .. 60	Harrow..... 29 .. 30
White..... 51 .. 60	Peas, Hog..... 25 .. 28	Oats, Feed..... 18 .. 22
Fine..... 64 .. 70	Maple..... 29 .. 32	Fine..... 22 .. 24
Rye..... 32 .. 36	Boilers..... 36 .. 37	Poland..... 22 .. 24
Barley..... 29 .. 27	Beans, Ticks..... 25 .. 27	Potato..... 24 .. 26
Malt..... 31 to 33		

WEEKLY AVERAGE FOR APRIL 8.

Wheat..... 57s. 8d.	AGGREGATE AVERAGE OF SIX WEEKS.	DUTY ON FOREIGN CORN FOR THE PRESENT WEEK.
Barley..... 26 2	Wheat..... 59s. 6d.	Wheat..... 27s. 8d.
Oats..... 17 11	Barley..... 27 4	Barley..... 21 4
Rye..... 32 11	Oats..... 18 10	Oats..... 19 9
Beans..... 30 0	Rye..... 33 9	Rye..... 19 9
Peas..... 30 0	Beans..... 31 0	Beans..... 22 9
	Peas..... 32 2	Peas..... 21 3

ADVERTISEMENTS.

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After the adoption of a Resolution recording an emphatic Protest against the many and grievous evils inflicted by class legislation.

1. It was resolved unanimously,

On the motion of the Rev. THOMAS SPENCER, of Bath; seconded by FREDERICK WARREN, of Manchester;—

"That inasmuch as the object of this conference is to concert the best measures for securing by Christian and peaceable means alone a full, fair, and free representation of the people, the conference deem it incumbent upon them at the commencement of their proceedings to examine the grounds upon which the right of representation rests.

"They affirm that every person being a member of society, has an equal right with every other person to have a voice in the making of the laws which he is called upon to obey.

"They affirm that this just principle has already been recognised in the British constitution, for by various ancient statutes it is provided, that 'no person be compelled to pay any tax, or make any loan to the king against his will,' and by a statute of King Edward III. it is declared that 'such loans are against reason, and the franchise of the land.' These enactments are confirmed and expounded by the celebrated petition of right, which provides that 'no man be compelled to make or yield any gift or tax without common consent by act of parliament.'

"They affirm that this right is further sanctioned by the dictates of that holy religion which teaches men to do to others as they would that others should do unto them.

"That, therefore, this conference recognising the inherent and inalienable right of suffrage, and allowing only such limitations as naturally arise out of the right itself, are equally applicable to all classes, and are necessary for the practical exercise of such right, agree to demand the extension of the elective franchise to every man of twenty-one years of age, who is not deprived of his rights of citizenship in consequence of the verdict of a jury of his countrymen."

2. Resolved unanimously,

On the motion of ARCHIBALD PRENTICE, of Manchester; seconded by Rev. NOAH JONES, of Derby.

"That a false principle of representation, namely—that of property and not persons having been acted on for a great length of time in this country, many abuses have hereby arisen and been perpetuated,—that the removal of these abuses is necessary in order to render the principle of complete suffrage, as defined in the preceding resolution, practically beneficial; and that, therefore, this conference do now proceed to consider the details which in their opinion are essential for rendering the representation of the people upon the fundamental principle already declared—full, fair, and free."

3. Resolved unanimously,

On the motion of RICHARD GARDNER, of Manchester; seconded by WILLIAM TAUNTON, of Coventry;—

"That whilst this conference are of opinion that every man ought to be able and willing to give an open and conscientious vote, yet, that under the present circumstances of this country, and with the general prevalence of bribery and intimidation, they are of opinion that the system of voting by ballot will most effectually secure the free exercise of the suffrage, and they affirm that such free exercise of the suffrage is sanctioned by acts of parliament which have repeatedly declared (although the declaration is continually violated), that 'Elections ought to be free.'

4. Resolved unanimously,

On the motion of JOHN MITCHELL, of Aberdeen; seconded by JAMES MILLS, of Oldham;—

"That for the purpose of securing a fair and equal representation of the people, it is necessary that the whole country be divided into districts, each containing as nearly as may be, an equal number of electors."

5. Resolved unanimously,

On the motion of LAWRENCE HEYWORTH, of Liverpool; seconded by JAMES B. O'BRIEN, from Wotton-under-Edge;—

"That in order to carry out the principle of freedom in elections, this conference affirm the eligibility of all men, chosen by a majority of votes, to be members of parliament, without respect to the possession of property."

6. Resolved unanimously,

On the motion of JOHN H. PARRY, of London; seconded by J. S. WHITTEM, of Coventry;—

"That all legal election expenses, and a reasonable remuneration to members of parliament for their services, ought to be borne at the public expense."

7. Resolved,

On the motion of WILLIAM LOVETT, of London; seconded by FREDERICK WARREN, of Manchester;—

"That it is of great importance to secure and maintain the responsibility of members to their constituents, and this conference are of opinion that annual parliaments are a proper means for securing this object."

It was also resolved unanimously to form a "National Complete Suffrage Union," one of whose objects should be to oppose the return of every member of the present House of Commons, who may not vote in favour of the motion which William Sharman Crawford, M.P., is about to introduce, unless he pledge himself to vote hereafter in favour of our objects; and that the Union should adopt every just, peaceable, legal, and constitutional means for carrying the above resolutions into effect, and only such.

It was further resolved unanimously,

"That the especial thanks of this conference be given to the following forty-one members of parliament

(tellers included), who honestly recorded their votes in favour of William Sharman Crawford's motion of the 28th August, 1841—that the following clause be added to the address to the Queen":—

"That we further respectfully represent to your Majesty, that, in our opinion, the distress which your Majesty deplores is mainly attributable to the circumstances of your whole people not being fully and fairly represented in this House, and that we feel it will be our duty to consider the means of so extending and regulating the suffrage, and of adopting such improvement in the system of voting as will confer on the working classes that just weight in the representative body which is necessary to secure a due consideration of their interests, and which their present endurance of suffering gives them the strongest title to claim."

The following members voted on the occasion.

Tellers—Mr Sharman Crawford and Mr T. Duncombe.	Johnson, General (Oldham)
Aglionby, Henry A.	Johnson, A. (Kilmarnock)
Bell, John (Thirsk)	Layard, Captain
Blake, Mark, (Mayo co.)	Marsland, Henry
Blake, M. J. (Galway tn.)	Murphy, Francis Stack
Blake, Sir V. (Galway)	Napier, Sir Charles
Blewitt, Reginald J.	O'Brien, C. (Clare)
Bowing, Dr.	O'Brien, J. (Limerick city)
Bridgeman, Hewitt	Peechell, Captain
Brotherton, Joseph	Powell, C. (Limerick co.)
Butler, Hon. Colonel	Rawdon, Colonel
Cobden, Richard	Rennie, George
Collins, William	Rundle, John
Elphinstone, Howard	Seale, Sir John Henry
Ewart, William	Wallace, Robert
Fleetwood, Sir P. H.	Wason, Rigby
Gibson, Thos. Milner	Williams, W. (Coventry)
Granger, Thos. Colpitts	Wilson, Mathew
Hay, Sir Andrew Leith	Yorke, H. R. (York)
Hill, Lord Marcus	Hindley, Charles

It was also resolved unanimously,

"That this conference cannot separate without recording their heart-felt gratitude to Edw. Maiil, Editor of the *Nonconformist*, for his powerful advocacy of our principles, and tendering their thanks to that portion of the public press which has honestly reported the proceedings and advocated the cause of complete suffrage."

JOSEPH STURGE, Chairman.

COPY OF A LETTER from Mr J. F. WINKS, Bookseller, Leicester, to Messrs T. ROBERTS and Co., Proprietors of PARR'S LIFE PILLS, 9, Crane Court, Fleet Street, London.

"Gentlemen—Since I have been agent for your valuable medicine, numerous cures have come under my observation. It would occupy too much of my time, and of your valuable space to enter into detail of them all. I give below a few which now occur to my mind.

"A person in Oxford Street, Leicester, aged 44, had been ill two years of a kind of influenza. The club surgeon said he was in a consumption, and would never recover. He began to take these pills three months ago, previous to which he had been confined to his bed six months. The pills first brought away a great deal of offensive matter, and then he gradually recovered. Can now walk about without a stick, and thought it his duty to make it known. He called again afterwards, and begged his name might not be published, as it might offend the club doctor.

"The wife of Mr BROWN, in Fleet Street, has been in a low way for some time; she took the pills regularly, and soon found her spirits more cheerful; and her sight and hearing, which had been affected, were improved. She said they were pleasant to take, not causing a sickly feeling or giving the least pain.

"Miss EVANS, Chatham Street, is a mender in a warehouse; had been much afflicted for several years, and not able to do more than two hours' work in a day; she took the pills, and soon was improved in health, and could see much better. She now works her regular hours.

"Mr HENSHAW, of Bagworth, has been long subject to palpitation of the heart, and could not walk up hill. Had the advice of an eminent physician in Leicester, but was no better till he took these pills, but now is quite recovered.

"The wife of Mr J. FROST, at the same place, was so tormented with a cough, that she could not sleep. She had taken the pills, which had done her, her husband said, 'a world of good.'

"Mr R. VANN, of Belgrave, had been ill five years of palpitation of the heart. Had been in the infirmary, and under several physicians and surgeons. Has been gradually improving since he took these pills, and is now able to work.

"Mrs TURNER, of Whetstone, had found them very beneficial for the scrofula.

"Many other cases have been mentioned by persons who have purchased the pills. Indeed the very extensive and increasing sale of this useful medicine is the best proof that can be desired how highly it is appreciated.

"I shall be happy to answer inquiries.

"J. F. WINKS, Bookseller, Leicester.

"20th March, 1841."

CAUTION—BEWARE OF IMITATIONS.

In order to protect the public from imitations, the Hon. Commissioners of Stamps have ordered the words "PARR'S LIFE PILLS," to be engraved on the government stamp, which is pasted round the sides of each box, in white letters on a red ground. Without this mark of authenticity they are spurious and an imposition! Prepared only by the proprietors, T. Roberts and Co., 9, Crane Court, Fleet Street, London, and sold wholesale by their appointment, by E. Edwards, 67, St Paul's; also by Barclay and Sons, Farringdon Street; and Sutton and Co., Bow Church Yard, and retail by at least one agent in every town in the United Kingdom, and by most respectable dealers in medicine. Price 1s. 1½d. 2s. 9d., and family boxes 11s. each. Full directions are given with each box.

GRATIS.—The Life and Times of Thomas Parr, who lived to be 152 years of age, 32 pages, with fine engravings, anecdotes, poetry, &c., and Remarks on Disease, Health, and the Means of Prolonging Life, may be had gratis of all agents for the sale of PARR'S LIFE PILLS.

Printed and Published at the Office, a No. 4, Crane Court, Fleet Street, near Fetter Lane, in the City of London, by JOHN HENRY DAVIS, of No. 76, York Road, Lambeth, in the county of Surrey, on WEDNESDAY, 13th of APRIL, 1842.